THURSDAY
May 16, 2024

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CAA TAKES EFFECT

Over 300 applicants get Indian citizenship

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HEARING TOMORROW

SC questions Uttarakhand on forest fires

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Slovakia PM Robert Fico shot at, critical

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CHANGING COURSE

Social media's impact on Indian politics

It is making the party workers less relevant

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GOLDEN ARM

Neeraj wins with 82.27m throw

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NEARBY

60 AI-powered cameras to be installed

BENGALURU
The NHAI has initiated the installation of 60 Artificial Intelligence-powered traffic enforcement cameras at strategic locations on the Bengaluru-Mysuru access-controlled highway.
» Page 5

Intellectuals write to CM

BENGALURU
As many as 107 writers, intellectuals, and activists from Karnataka wrote an open letter to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Wednesday demanding theimmediate arrest of MP Prajwal Revanna. » Page 6

Prabir Purkayastha's arrest under UAPA invalid, says SC

Bench says the probe agency did not inform him of the grounds of arrest; the mere fact that a chargesheet has been filed in the case would not validate 'illegality' committed during the arrest

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday said it felt "no hesitation" to declare the arrest and remand of 74-year-old journalist and online portal *NewsClick* founder Prabir Purkayastha under the draconian Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) by the Delhi Police as "invalid in the eyes of law", requiring his release from custody.

A Bench of Justices B.R. Gavai and Sandeep Mehta said neither Mr. Purkayastha nor his counsel was provided the grounds of his arrest in writing.

Mr. Purkayastha, who was accused of using Chinese funding to promote "anti-national propaganda" through digital media, was arrested by the Delhi Police Special Cell on October 3, 2023. He was remanded in police custody the next day. His lawyer was informed of the grounds of arrest on October 5.

"The right to be informed about the grounds of arrest flows from Article 22(1) (an arrested person shall be informed of the grounds of arrest and allowed to consult a lawyer of his or her choice) of the Constitution and any infringement of this fundamental right would vitiate the process of arrest and remand," Justice Mehta, who authored the judgment, held.

The mere fact that a chargesheet was filed in the case would not validate the illegality committed at the time of arrest, the court said.

Quashing the arrest, the court however said its verdict was not a comment on the merits of the case against Mr. Purkayastha.

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'MOST SACROSANCT RIGHT'
» PAGE 12

Prabir Purkayastha after his release.

SC stricture

Key observations of the court in connection with Prabir Purkayastha's arrest

- The entire exercise was done in a clandestine manner and was a blatant attempt to circumvent the due process of law
- It deprived the accused of the opportunity to avail himself of the services of a legal practitioner of his choice
- As in the case of arrests, the grounds of detention should be communicated in writing to a detainee

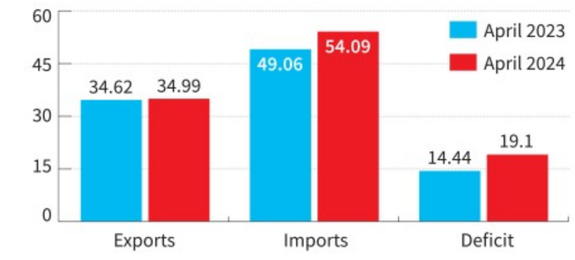
NewsClick editor released from Tihar jail

NewsClick editor Prabir Purkayastha was released from the Tihar jail after a Delhi court granted him bail, hours after the Supreme Court order. The Delhi court imposed certain conditions on him. » PAGE 12

April trade gap hits $19 bn as imports outpace exports

Widening deficit

Compared with the previous year, India's goods trade deficit widened by 32.3% to hit $19.1 billion in April 2024



Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

India's merchandise exports began 2024-25 on a mildly positive note, rising 1.07% to $35 billion in April. But the import bill jumped 10.3% to $54.1 billion, thanks to a surge in global oil and gold prices, widening the trade deficit to a four-month high of $19.1 billion.

Almost all of the sharp 32.3% year-on-year surge in April's goods trade deficit, compared with the $14.4 billion gap in April 2023, was fuelled by gold imports that tripled to $3.11 billion from $1.01 billion, and a 20.2% rise in the oil import bill, which amounted to $2.8 billion. The gold import bill in April was also more than double the previous month's tally.

Most analysts were surprised and concerned by April's trade tally.

CONTINUED ON
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Council polls: BJP-JD(S) likely to return to 4:2 formula

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

With its alliance partner the Janata Dal (Secular) insisting on its promised share of seats in the Legislative Council polls, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is likely to concede one more seat to the former. The BJP will likely give up another seat to its partner making the seat-sharing formula 4:2. Six Council seats go to polls on June 3.

Senior party leader B.S. Yediyurappa had initially said that two seats would go the way of the JD(S).

The JD(S), however, is insistent that South Teachers' constituency, a seat held by it earlier, should be given to it.

FULL REPORT ON
» PAGE 6

Big weave

Workers giving finishing touches to a carpet outside the Hazratbal shrine in Srinagar on Wednesday. The carpet, 72 feet long and 40 feet wide, took almost eight years to weave. It is scheduled to be despatched to a palace in West Asia. NISSAR AHMAD

Youth stabs 19-year-old to death in Hubballi after she rejected his proposal

The Hindu Bureau
HUBBALLI

Even as Hubballi is yet to recover from the shock of the murder of student Neha Hiremath on a college campus, another young girl was stabbed to death in the city on Wednesday by a youth whose proposal of marriage to the girl had reportedly been rejected.

According to Police Commissioner Renuka Sukumar, 19-year-old Anjali Mohan Ambiger of Veerapour Oni was stabbed to death by the youth, identified as Girish Sawanth, at her residence on Wednesday morning.

The accused came to the house of Anjali, where she resided with her grandmother, had a heated argument with family members and then suddenly stabbed Anjali four times with a knife. Although the girl was rushed to a hospital, she succumbed.

The Police Commissioner said two teams had been constituted to nab the accused.

The Police Commissioner confirmed that the family had visited the police station on April 22, and the details of the purpose of their visit were being collected.

She had ordered the Deputy Commissioner (Crime) to inquire into the matter, she said.

This incident is the fourth such case in less than a month.

The same city on April 18 saw the murder of Neha on a college campus. Hours before her murder, Anusha, 25, was killed by a man in Bengaluru for similar reasons. On May 9, a minor girl who just passed class 10 was beheaded by a 33-year-old in Kodagu district.

In Hubballi on Wednesday, MLA Mahesh Tenginakai, who met the family members, alleged that the murder was the result of the failure of law and order in the State and the failure of the police in handling the case.

Although the victim's family complained to the police about the threat from the accused, the police did not take any action, he said. There was a protest in front of the house, but the police convinced the family to go ahead with the funeral.

The father of Neha Hiremath and municipal councillor Niranjan Hiremath, who also met the family members, held the police commissioner responsible for the increased instances of crime in the twin cities and demanded that she be transferred immediately.

The victim, Anjali Ambiger, along with her two sisters, was living with her grandmother, who works as a domestic help. Anjali, too, used to work as a catering help.

While her mother is dead, her father deserted the family. The accused, Girish Sawanth, is a resident of Yallapur Oni and had proposed marriage to her, to which her grandmother Gangamma had not given consent.

Infosys Prize now only for researchers aged up to 40, says Infosys Science Foundation

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Infosys Science Foundation (ISF) on May 15 announced certain changes in the Infosys Prize. The upper age limit for prize winners is being revised from 50 years to 40 years.

ISF explained that it is steering the Infosys Prize in a new direction by transitioning from a mid-career prize to an early-career prize, with the objective of rewarding potential and recognising the promise of future achievement.

The fundamental objective of the Infosys Prize continues to be to recognise the best research that benefits humanity and creates role models for young scholars and aspiring scientists in India.

To further its objective of fostering collaboration and access, the ISF now requires all winners, who are based outside India at the time of winning the prize, to spend time at Indian institutes of their choice.

Winners who are not based in India will be requested to spend 30 days (in a maximum of two trips) at a host institute in India, to build networks and spark conversations with research groups here. ISF hopes these early tie-ups could transform into mutually beneficial long-term partnerships.

The categories that the Infosys Prize recognises would broadly stay the same. Economics, however, will now be a separate category in the Infosys Prize. Previously, it was awarded under the Social Sciences category.

Infosys co-founders Narayana Murthy and S. Gopalakrishnan, and Pratima Murthy address mediapersons at Infosys Science Foundation, Jayanagar, Bengaluru on Wednesday.

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» EPAPER PAGE 7

IoT-enabled wheelchair device developed for rehabilitation of stroke patients

Jahnavi T.R.
BENGALURU

The researchers at the International Institute of Information Technology Bangalore (IIITB) have developed 'XoRehab' an Internet of Things (IoT) enabled wheelchair device to help in the rehabilitation of stroke patients post-surgery.

The device was developed in Center for Internet of Ethical Things (CIET) at IIITB. The CIET was established in collaboration with the World Economic Forum (WEF) with support from Karnataka Innovation & Technology Society (KITS) and sponsored by IT-BT Department of Government of Karnataka.

"Post-surgery, stroke patients need to undergo a lot of physiotherapy. However, validated physiotherapists are limited in hospitals. Once patients, especially those who come from rural areas, are discharged they have to come back all the way to big hospitals to undergo physiotherapy and this becomes a logistic hurdle for patients," Madhav Rao, Associate Professor and CIET Convener, IIITB, told *The Hindu*.

He continued, "One of the neurosurgeons at Nimhans suggested that we develop a portable device (for rehabilitation) that patients can take home for lease from the hospital and bring back, once they are better. Hence, we started developing this device."

The device is also enabled with Surface Electromyography which fetches the muscle behaviour of the patient and helps in the analysis of muscle recovery.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 4

Call him old or call him a find, Shashank Singh does not mind

The lad from Bhilai made his debut in senior domestic limited-overs during the 2014-15 season and earned his first Ranji Trophy cap five years later; in this IPL, he has been one of the standout performers, consistently delivering impressive performances as a middle-order batter

K.R. DEEPAK

VIJAY SONEJI

THE GIST

- Growing up in Bhilai and representing Madhya Pradesh in Under-15 and Under-17 cricket, Shashank, the son of a police officer and telecommunications officer, moved to Mumbai with his family to pursue his cricketing dreams
- While competing in Mumbai's *maidans*, Shashank caught the eye of IPL scouts, earning stints with Delhi Daredevils (now Capitals) and Rajasthan Royals between 2017 and 2021. His IPL debut was with Sunrisers Hyderabad in 2022
- He finally made it big this season with his heroics for Punjab Kings. Shashank's stunning unbeaten 68 off 28 balls, helped his team chase down the highest-ever IPL target of 262 with eight balls to spare
- Despite his accomplishments, no conversation with Shashank is complete without mentioning the IPL Auction in Dubai on December 19. After the franchise raised the paddle for him, there was confusion as another player with the same name, a younger hard-hitting batter from Punjab, seemed to be preferred

Amol Karhadkar

At 32, he has spent nearly 10 years in domestic cricket. He got his first IPL contract over six years ago. Yet, it is only now that he's being hailed as the big discovery of IPL 2024. Welcome to Shashank's world! Shashank Singh made his debut in senior domestic limited-overs cricket during the 2014-15 season. He earned his first Ranji Trophy cap five years later. In this IPL, he has been one of the standout performers, consistently delivering impressive performances as a middle-order batter.

"It feels good when someone refers to me as a find. Ultimately, that's because I have been able to back myself, showcase my potential, and deliver frequently this IPL season," a relaxed Shashank tells *The Hindu*. "People like you follow domestic cricket so closely that you know that I have been around the circuit for a decade now. I am not sure how I have fared, but I have survived. I have always been confident about my abilities, and I am glad I have been able to execute them better."

Shashank doesn't shy away from hitting good balls out of the park, but one cannot ignore his tendency to downplay himself. The fact that it took him a lot of time to cement a place in a side – domestic or IPL – seems to have made him more practical in his approach.

Growing up in Bhilai and representing Madhya Pradesh in Under-15 and Under-17 cricket, Shashank, the son of a police officer and telecommunications officer, moved to Mumbai with his family to pursue his cricketing dreams.

Although he made it to the Mumbai Under-19 team, his senior debut was delayed. He finally made the cut as an all-rounder in 2014-15 season, but despite his effective medium-pace bowling, he struggled to secure a regular spot in the team.

In 2018-19, he tried his luck in Pondicherry but eventually returned to Chhattisgarh, which was a recognised member of the Board of Control for Cricket in India by now. During his first season with Chhattisgarh, Shashank played a crucial role in securing its first-ever victory over Mumbai in all formats at the senior level.

While competing in Mumbai's *maidans*, Shashank had caught the eye of IPL scouts, earning stints with Delhi Daredevils (now Capitals) and Rajasthan Royals between 2017 and 2021. His IPL debut was with Sunrisers Hyderabad in 2022, but he was released and went unsold in the 2023 auction.

Fast forward to 2024, and Shashank's fortunes have turned. His heroics for Punjab Kings, including a stunning unbeaten 68 off 28 balls, helped his team chase down the highest-ever IPL target of 262 with eight balls to spare. Shashank, unaffected by his past setbacks, embraces his success this time.

"This is a by-product of all the struggles I have had at various levels. I have learned from every failure and little success I have had over all these years."

He chuckles at being called "old", just as he does when dubbed "the find of the season". Thanks to his morning yoga routine and countless hours on the cricket grounds across India, Shashank seems to be in his prime. His knack for breaking down challenging targets, like turning 127 off 54 balls into "six sixes and six fours," shows his confidence.

Age doesn't bother him; he's focused on emulating his Mumbai teammates to reach his dream of playing for India.

"I have been playing with Pravin Tambe at D.Y. Patil (in Mumbai's corporate leagues) and have seen him debut in the IPL and in Ranji in his 40s," Shashank says. "And I have a friend in Surya (Suryakumar Yadav) with whom I have been playing for Parsee Gymkhana for the last 15 years."

> I got a duck in our season opener (against Delhi Capitals on March 23), was sitting dejected in the dug-out, and suddenly Jonny (Bairstow) tapped me from behind and said, 'If I don't see you smiling, I will stop speaking with you'. I have kept it in mind ever since

Shashank emphasises the Suryakumar example, noting how both he and Suryakumar excel at turning high-risk shots into calculated risks with precision, especially under pressure.

"The world sat up and took notice when Surya hit Jofra Archer for a six off his first ball in international cricket, but I had been watching him do the same for well over a decade, so I knew he would do it. Similarly, I know what I am capable of, and I support my abilities."

Being the mature individual he is, on and off the field, Shashank doesn't require pep talks from mentors. He gleans pointers from short conversations as adeptly as he reads a bowler's wrist – it could be with former India cricketer Abey Kuruvilla or his head coach at one of his earlier teams, SRH's Brian Lara.

"We miss him (Kuruvilla) at D.Y. Patil since he is with BCCI now, but he calls and shares his observations regularly," said Shashank. "And he (Brian) texted me the other day to compliment me, and we had a short chat."

Even Punjab Kings head coach Trevor Bayliss and director Sanjay Bangar are no exceptions. Just before the KKR game, Bangar and Shashank bumped into each other over breakfast. "All he told me was to be careful about a specific ball that Sunil Narine bowls, and I kept it in mind. Even Trevor – we had this meet and greet event with the fans, and someone was late by a couple of minutes – so in those two minutes, Trevor had a suggestion about a drive I played, and that's about it," Shashank says.

Throughout the conversation, there is a wide grin on Shashank's face. Perhaps Jonny Bairstow should take credit for it. "I got a duck in our season opener (against Delhi Capitals on March 23), was sitting dejected in the dug-out, and suddenly Jonny tapped me from behind and said, 'If I don't see you smiling, I will stop speaking with you'. I have kept it in mind ever since."

Despite his accomplishments, no conversation with Shashank is complete without mentioning the IPL Auction in Dubai on December 19. After the franchise raised the paddle for him, there was confusion as another player with the same name, a younger hard-hitting batter from Punjab, seemed to be preferred.

The franchise issued a clarification the next day, but Shashank wasn't fazed. Bangar called him 'around 6 a.m.' and assured him of the franchise's trust. "Hitesh Goswami sir, our Chhattisgarh head coach and talent scout for the franchise, indicated that Punjab Kings was interested in me," he recalls. "It's been reduced to nothing but a joke in our camp ever since."

Shashank even appeared in a social media video for the franchise, humorously addressing the identity confusion with a famous dialogue from the Hindi film *Andaz Apna Apna*.

With his confidence being sky-high and form at its peak, call him old or call him a find. Shashank Singh, at 32, does not mind!

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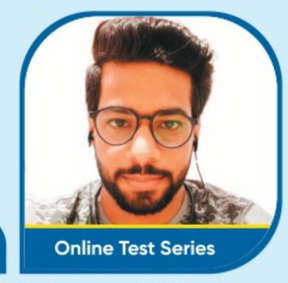

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General, central obesities linked to higher risk of colorectal cancer

The risk of colorectal cancer seems to be higher in those who are 'generally obese' and those who are 'tall and centrally obese', a study has found. Different genetic pathways may explain this. Data from the study could also be used to develop new screening tools for these cancers in future

Sayantan Datta

Obesity rates are rising worldwide. In India, a 2022 study in *The Lancet* estimated the percentage of obese women and men to be 9.8% and 5.4% respectively. Along with higher risk of heart disease and diabetes, obesity has been linked to a higher susceptibility to colorectal cancer (CRC), among others.

CRC refers to cancers of the colon or the rectum. The CRC incidence is relatively low in India, but the percentage of people who are alive five years after a CRC diagnosis is reportedly under 40% – one of the lowest in the world. According to a 2017 study in the *Indian Journal of Surgical Oncology*, CRC patients in India are generally young and present more frequently with advanced stages of the disease.

Not all are equal

While researchers have known that obese individuals have a higher risk of CRC, a *Science Advances* study published in April 2024 reported evidence that not all obese people are at equal risk.

Instead, the risk seems to be higher for those who are "generally obese" and those who are "tall [and] centrally obese".

The study argued that different genetic pathways may explain how CRC is caused in different obesity subtypes.

"The study highlights the importance of considering body shapes as compared to BMI for risk assessment" of CRC," Dhruvi Shah, a doctoral candidate at the University of Bonn studying the association between obesity and influenza, said. Ms. Shah has studied the relationship between obesity and pancreatic cancer. Data from the study could also be used to develop new screening tools for CRC in the future, she added.

Types of obesity

Obesity is generally defined with the body mass index (BMI), a number that accounts for the height and the weight of the individual. A BMI of 25 kg/m^2 or above indicates being 'overweight' while 30 kg/m^2 indicates 'obesity'.

However, this definition doesn't say anything about how fat is distributed in the body. Scientists are interested in this detail because body fat distribution better predicts obesity's adverse effects.

The distribution of fat in the body can be described using measures like waist circumference, hip circumference or the ratio between the two, i.e. waist-to-hip ratio.But according to Neetu Kalra, a cancer therapeutics researcher at Azim Premji University, Bhopal, these estimates don't indicate whether certain types of body fat distribution put individuals at higher risk of obesity-related diseases.

Two groups at risk

In the new study, scientists at the International Agency for Research on Cancer, France; Imperial College London; and the Girona Biomedical Research Institute, Spain, considered how these measures related collectively to CRC risk.

They began by analysing the BMI, weight, height, waist circumference, hip circumference, and the waist-to-hip ratio of more than 3 lakh people to group them into four body shapes based on their observable characteristics: PC1, PC2, PC3, and PC4.

Obesity is generally defined by body mass index, which doesn't say anything about how fat is distributed in the body. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

PC1 individuals were "generally obese", while PC2 included tall individuals with a low waist-to-hip ratio.

PC3 included tall individuals with central obesity – with excess fat deposited around the abdomen. And PC4 had those who had an "athletic body shape".

The data were derived from the U.K. Biobank, a large database with information about the genetics, lifestyles, and other health parameters of more than half a million people in the country. Of the 3 lakh individuals, 3,728 had been diagnosed with CRC.

PC1 and PC3 individuals were strongly correlated with higher CRC risk while "PC2 and PC4 were not associated with CRC risk," the researchers found.

These associations were also linked to the site at which CRC occurred and the sex of the individual.

Different obesities, different genes

Next, using a technique called genome-wide association study (GWAS), the researchers looked for small variations in the DNA of more than 400,000 participants in the Biobank database and found 570 novel variations characterising the four body shapes.

> Genetic variations associated with risk for PC1 individuals were most highly expressed in the brain and in the pituitary gland

GWAS is used to find correlations between gene variations and traits in large groups of people.

For example, they found that a variation in a gene called *AKT* was implicated in the higher CRC risk for PC1 individuals.

AKT regulates cell survival, insulin signalling, and the formation of blood vessels and tumours in humans.

Similarly, a variation of the *RAF1* gene was found to be implicated in PC3 individuals' CRC risk. *RAF1* mediates, among other processes, the transformation of normal cells into cancerous cells.

These genetic variations could explain the increased CRC risk in "generally obese" and "tall [and] centrally obese" body types, they wrote in their paper.

The genes at play

But gene expression varies between different body shapes and from tissue to tissue. A tissue is a group of similar cells that perform a specific function. The scientists studied whether the gene variations associated with each body type were expressed distinctly in different tissues.

Based on this analysis, they found that genetic variations associated with risk for PC1 individuals were most highly expressed in the "brain and in the pituitary gland".

The pituitary gland is located as the base of the brain and produces hormones important for regulating growth, blood pressure, and functions of the sex organs, the thyroid glands, and the kidneys.

In contrast, the variations associated with risk in PC3 individuals were found enriched in "adipose tissue, nerve, cervix uteri, uterus, blood vessel, breast, fallopian tube, and ovary".

Could these genetic variations be directly responsible for the higher risk of CRC in PC1 and PC3 individuals? To answer this question, the researchers conducted a Mendelian randomisation test. Named for the founder of modern genetics, Gregor Mendel, the test uses statistical methods to check whether one variable (measured variation in genes) could be causing changes in the value of another (risk of CRC).

For this, the researchers used data from the Colorectal Transdisciplinary Study (CORECT), the Colon Cancer Family Registry (CCFR), and the Genetics and Epidemiology of Colorectal Cancer Consortium (GECCO) repositories.

They found that the genetic variations found in the GWAS analysis of PC1 and PC3 were "positively associated" with CRC risk. That is, the increased risk of CRC in these body types could be the effect of the corresponding gene variations.

'Large independent datasets'

The authors wrote in their paper that "the observed difference in genetic and tissue expressions suggests that PC1 and PC3 may capture different molecular origins and metabolic consequences of these body shapes and may reflect divergent mechanisms by which body shapes influence the risk of CRC."That is, CRC arises in different body shapes through different physiological mechanisms.

Dr. Kalra, the cancer therapeutics researcher, said a key strength of the study lies in its use of "large independent datasets" that help the study cement its findings. But she also said a person's body shape may change over time and that "the study doesn't provide information on whether and how" these changes "affect their CRC risk." Ms. Shah, the University of Bonn obesity researcher, said recent studies point to cases where obese individuals can be free from cardiac problems, diabetes, and high blood pressure and cholesterol – and suggested future studies could examine CRC risk associated with these individuals.

(Sayantan Datta is a science journalist and a faculty member at Krea University and posts at @queersprings.)

According to new research, the summer months in 2023 were on average 2.2 degrees C warmer than the estimated average temperature until 1890.

Summer 2023 was hottest in 2,000 years, says study

Reuters

The intense northern hemisphere summer heat that drove wildfires across the Mediterranean, buckled roads in Texas and strained power grids in China last year made it not just the warmest summer on record but the warmest in some 2,000 years, new research suggests.

The stark finding comes from one of two new studies released on Tuesday, as both global temperatures and climate-warming emissions continue to climb.

Scientists had quickly declared last year's June to August period as the warmest since record-keeping began in the 1940s.

New work published in the journal *Nature* suggests the 2023 heat eclipsed temperatures over a far longer timeline, a finding established by looking at meteorological records dating to the mid-1800s and temperature data based on the analysis of tree rings across nine northern sites.

"When you look at the long sweep of history, you can see just how dramatic recent global warming is," said study co-author Jan Esper, a climate scientist at Johannes Gutenberg University in Germany.

Last year's summer season temperatures on lands between 30 and 90 degrees north latitude reached 2.07 degrees C higher than pre-industrial averages, the study said.

Heatwaves are already taking a toll on people's health, with more than 1.5 lakh deaths in 43 countries linked to heatwaves for each year between 1990 and 2019

Based on tree ring data, the summer months in 2023 were on average 2.2 degrees C warmer than the estimated average temperature until 1890.

The finding was not entirely a surprise. By January, scientists with the European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service were saying the year of 2023 was "very likely" to have been the warmest in 100 millennia.

But proving such a long record is unlikely, Dr. Esper said. He and two other European scientists argued in a paper last year that year-by-year comparisons can't be established over such a vast time scale with current scientific methods.

"We don't have such data," Dr. Esper added. "That was an overstatement."

Last year's intense summer heat was amplified by the El Nino climate pattern, which typically coincides with warmer global temperatures, leading to "longer and more severe heatwaves, and extended periods of drought," Dr. Esper said.

Heatwaves are already taking a toll on people's health, with more than 1.5 lakh deaths in 43 countries linked to heatwaves for each year between 1990 and 2019, according to a second study published on Tuesday in the journal *PLOS Medicine*.

More than half of those heatwave-related excess deaths occurred in Asia.

When the data are adjusted for population size, Europe had the highest per capita toll with an average of 655 heat-related deaths each year per 10 million residents. Within the region, Greece, Malta, and Italy registered the highest excess deaths.

Extreme heat can trigger heart problems and breathing difficulty or cause heat stroke.

THE SCIENCE QUIZ

Please send in your answers to science@thehindu.co.in

The solar cycle: when the Sun's magnetic field flips

Vasudevan Mukunth

QUESTION 1

A powerful solar storm on the Sun a week ago produced beautiful aurorae over many parts of the earth on May 10. Such solar storms are more frequent when the Sun nears the peak of its solar cycle — an 11-year period in which the Sun's magnetic field flips direction. After two solar cycles, the Sun completes one ____ cycle. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 2

As the Sun approaches the peak of a solar cycle, its surface develops more X. From the earth, Xs look like small patches darker than their surroundings, which is the case because these patches have more intense magnetic fields that make them cooler than other areas. What is X?

QUESTION 3

The positions at which X (from Q2) appear on the Sun differ depending on which phase of the solar cycle the star is in. Name the German astronomer for whom this law is named.

QUESTION 4

What is the name of the process that produces the Sun's magnetic field? Scientists don't fully understand how it works but believe that it converts the kinetic energy from differential rotation in the star's interiors and the movement of heat into electromagnetic energy.

QUESTION 5

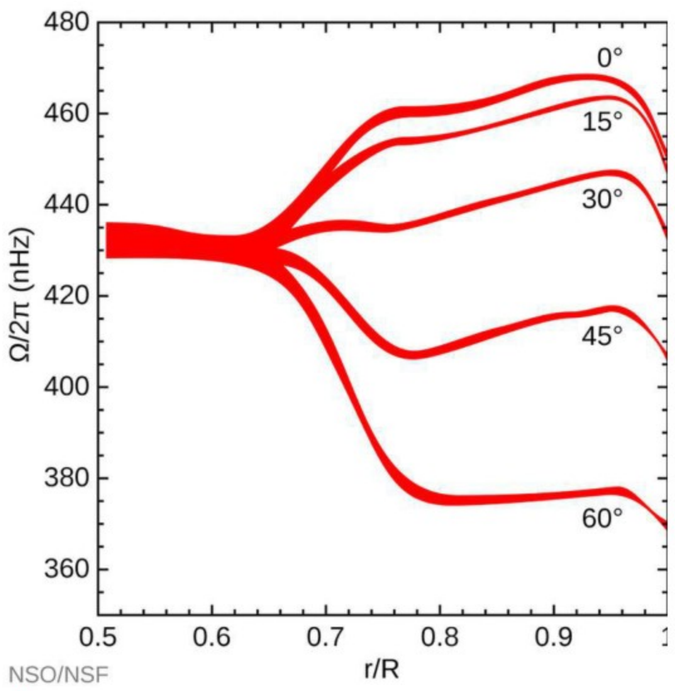
What is the name given to the 70-year period between the years 1645 and 1715 when the Sun produced an unusually low number of sunspots? The reason for this anomaly remains a mystery.

Answers:

1. Demographic group at highest risk of lupus nephritis
– **Ans: African-American women**
2. Phenomenon in which infectious antigens resemble self-antigens
– **Ans: Molecular mimicry**
3. Characteristic rash associated with lupus
– **Ans: Butterfly rash (or malar rash)**
4. Lupus's rash was thought to resemble the bite of this animal
– **Ans: Wolf**
5. Endocrine disease caused by auto-immune attack of beta cells
– **Ans: Type 1 diabetes**

Visual: **Paul Ehrlich**

First contact: ViswanadhaRao Batchu | K.N. Viswanathan | Shiva Nigam



Visual: This graph shows the different rates of rotation of the Sun's outermost layers (towards the right) versus the uniform rate in its interior. What is the transition between these two regimes called?
GLOBAL OSCILLATION NETWORK GROUP

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Cauvery Stage V: BWSSB prepares to supply water to 110 villages

Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board instructs officials to take up registration drives in the villages

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

BWSSB officials inspecting Cauvery Stage V works at Harohalli.

As the work on Cauvery Stage V nears completion, the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) is preparing to supply water to the 110 villages which are covered under it. It has also instructed the officials to take up registration drives in the villages.

"The work will be completed in a few weeks, and we will commence water supply after that. Prior to that, it is necessary to put in place the system for water supply and the process of registration for new connections," said Ram Prasath Manohar, Chairman, BWSSB H

e added, "Under Stage V, Bengaluru city will receive approximately 750 MLD (Million Litres per Day) of additional water."

"Hence, officials have been instructed to encourage everyone in the 110 villages to avail Cauvery water supply efficiently."

He also said that new registrations will bring in new revenue and help the Water Board to repay its loan and that is why it is fundamental for officials to go door-to-door for 15 days and encourage them to register for connection.

Following complaints from the 110 villages about illegal water connections, the chairman asked the officials to convert these into legal connections and bring revenue to the Water Board.

In April, the High Court declared the collection of Greater Bengaluru Water Supply and Sewerage Project (GBWSSP) charges and the Beneficiary Capital Contribution (BCC) charges from residents and the commercial ventures respectively in areas newly added to the city as illegal. However, Mr. Manohar said that a stay has been brought on the order and the BWSSB will continue collection of these charges for new connections.

Neither teachers nor students turn up in good numbers for special classes

Jayanth R.
BENGALURU

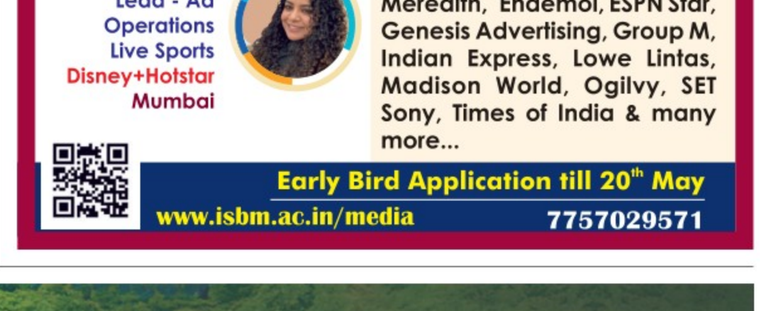
Government high schools were to reopen on Wednesday for special classes to coach students who have failed or secured low marks in Class 10 (SSLC) annual exam - 1, to prepare them for exam - 2, scheduled to begin on June 7. However, the response to this initiative has been lukewarm. In most schools only headmasters were present and very few teachers and students attended these special classes on Wednesday.

In several districts, high school teachers' associations have petitioned Deputy Directors of Public Instruction (DDPI) demanding a withdrawal of the order, issued on May 13, declaring special classes from May 15 to June 5. "We finished evaluation of answer sheets and were immediately rushed into election duty. It hasn't even been 10 days since and we have been called back to work at such short notice," one of the high school teachers rued. Y.A. Narayanaswamy, a Member of the Legislative Council (MLC) of the teacher's constituency, has also written a letter to the Principal Secretary, the Department of School Education and Literacy (DSEL), appealing to withdraw the circular.

The state government has introduced a new system of three annual exams for Class 10 and II PU students from this academic year and in light of the same, has organised these special classes. Especially, given that the pass percentage in SSLC exams have come down drastically this year. Pegged at 73.4%, it has declined by 10.49% compared to last year. However, this also doesnt reflect reality. The actual result had declined by 30% this year, which is why the State government decided to enhance the normalisation of scores in the interest of students as webcasting was a new intervention. And, it reduced the qualifying marks for attracting grace marks from the existing 35% to 25%, and grace marks had been increased from 10% to 20% in all subjects as a one-time measure for all three SSLC annual exams of 2024.

Among 8,25,468 students appeared in the examination a total of 6,08,336 students managed to pass and a total of 2,17,132 students failed.

Compared to the previous year, the number of 'C+' (50-59%) and 'C' (35-49%) grade students has increased. This year, the percentage of C+ and C grade students has increased by 22.38% and 23.66% respectively. Special classes are to be held for these students at all government high schools and the government has also arranged midday meals for the same.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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Unemployment rate for urban areas in the March quarter

6.7 in percentage. The unemployment rate for people aged 15 years and above in urban areas marginally declined from 6.8% in the January-March quarter of 2023, according to the National Sample Survey Survey. PTI

The Sri Lankan mercenaries killed in Russia-Ukraine war

16 The Sri Lankan military personnel had joined Russian and Ukrainian forces after unscrupulous foreign employment agencies misled them in the name of foreign employment, according to the Sri Lankan government. PTI

The marginal rise in India's merchandise exports in April 2024

34.99 in $ billion. The country's exports marginally rose from $34.62 billion in the year-ago month, according to government data. Imports increased to $54.09 billion from $49.06 billion in April 2023. PTI

The Indian seafarers in Iran's custody in the past eight months

40 The Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Sarbananda Sonowal, has asked Iran to release the Indian seafarers who were detained from four different merchant ships seized by Iran over the past eight months on different charges. PTI

Filipino activists sail to disputed shoal guarded by China

100 Activists, fishermen and journalists sail to the Scarborough Shoal, an atoll with a vast fishing lagoon, where Beijing's coast guard have used powerful water cannons to ward off 'intruders'. AP

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On Delhi's mounting waste crisis

As the national capital, Delhi needs to scale up its processing capacity to manage daily waste. The quantity of waste is expected to increase in the coming years together with the per capita waste generation

EXPLAINER

Pradeep Dadlani
Pushkara S.V.

The story so far:

The Supreme Court's recent criticism of solid waste management (SWM) in New Delhi highlights a critical issue. The national capital has more than 3,800 tonnes of solid waste remaining untreated. This waste reaches landfills and threatens public health and the environment.

What is the status of Delhi's SWM system?

According to the 2011 Census, New Delhi's population was about 1.7 crore, which in 2024 is expected to be around 2.32 crore. Considering an average per capita generation of about 0.6 kg/day per person, the city generates approximately 13,000 tonnes per day (TPD) of waste – roughly 1,400 truckloads – which adds up to about 42 lakh tonnes per annum. The city's population is expected to rise to 2.85 crore by 2031, so waste generation could go up to 17,000 TPD.

About 90% of the waste generated in the city is collected by the three municipal corporations: the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), Delhi Cantonment Board, and the New Delhi Municipal Corporation. Generally, about 50-55% of the waste generated in Indian cities is biodegradable wet waste; 35% is non-biodegradable wet waste; and 10% is an inert component. Accordingly, 7,000 TPD would be wet waste; 4,800 TPD dry waste; and 2,000 TPD inert.

What about the processing capacity of SWM in Delhi?

New Delhi has waste-processing facilities at Okhla, Bhalswa, Narela, Bawana, Tehkhand, SMA Industrial Area, Nilothi, and Ghazipur. These facilities have a collective design capacity of about 9,200 TPD. This includes composting facilities handling around 900-1,000 TPD and waste-to-energy projects of 8,200 TPD.

However, the MCD is disposing of unprocessed waste of 3,800 TPD in the three designated landfills: Gazipur, Bhalswa, and Okhla. These landfills, consisting of unprocessed wet and dry waste, generate methane gases, leachates, and cause landfill fires, adversely affecting the surrounding environment. The accumulation of unprocessed waste in these landfills has led to a staggering 2.58 crore tonnes of legacy waste piling up over 200 acres of land. The MCD initiated biomining to reduce the amount of waste in 2019, but the COVID-19 pandemic halted these efforts. Initially planned to be completed by 2024, this task will take another two to three years.

However, the environmental impact will persist until fresh waste is scientifically processed. With the current accumulation of 3,800 TPD of unprocessed waste, the landfills will only become bigger and taller.

What are the MCD's challenges?

The MCD faces several challenges in tackling waste within the city. One major issue is the lack of waste segregation at source. Many households and commercial establishments don't do this. As a result, unprocessed mixed waste enters landfills. Additionally, waste processing plants need large land parcels, of about 30-40 acres each, which is a challenge in Delhi. This challenge in turn leads to a significant portion of waste being left untreated.

Garbage tower: Rag pickers seen collecting items from the Bhalswa landfill in New Delhi on December 16, 2020. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Public awareness of proper waste management practices is also lacking, contributing to littering and improper disposal habits, which divert the MCD's attention towards clearing open points rather than processing wet waste.

Lack of regular waste collection services in certain areas also add to the buildup of waste as well as littering, while illegal dumping in open areas and water bodies increases the pressure on the municipal body, warranting more resources for clean-up.

Finally, a lack of coordination among various stakeholders – including multiple municipal corporations – results in inefficient waste management, further complicating the MCD's efforts to address the city's waste management issues.

What efforts need to be made in order the separate the waste?

As the national capital, Delhi needs to scale up its processing capacity to manage daily waste. The quantity of waste is expected to increase in the coming years together with the per capita waste generation. With this in mind, the MCD should design a waste-management plan to cater to about three crore people while the total design capacity of the city's waste processing facility should be 18,000 TPD.

Biodegradable wet waste should be composted or used to generate biogas. The design capacity of the wet-waste-processing system should be set at 9,000 tonnes. Typically, the capacity of composting facilities is around 500 tonnes per day, which means Delhi will need at least 18 composting or biogas plants to ensure no biodegradable wet waste reaches landfills. This will demand significant efforts from the MCD: to identify land, set up composting facilities, and operate them.

As for the non-biodegradable dry waste: about 2% will be recyclable, and this can be sent to recycling facilities. The remaining 33% won't yet be recyclable. The non-recyclable dry waste fraction is called refuse-derived fuel (RDF) and consists of plastics, paper, and textile waste. This material has good calorific value and can be used to generate power in waste-to-energy projects.

Although the cost of power generation through waste-to-energy projects tends to be slightly on the higher side, the objective is to scientifically manage waste and mitigate environmental impacts, particularly those arising from landfill fires.

Can waste processing be decentralised?

Given the challenges with identifying large land parcels, Delhi will need to partner with its neighbouring States to set up a few of these composting plants. Additionally, the market for organic compost produced from wet waste lies in the neighbouring States of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

Delhi city has 272 wards. States like Tamil Nadu and Kerala have set up decentralised Micro-Composting Centres (MCC) of five TPD capacity at the ward level. These MCCs can manage about 20% of the city's wet waste. Bengaluru has also set up ward-level Dry Waste Collection Centres (DWCC) of 2 TPD capacity each. These DWCCs can help manage about 10% of the dry waste.

Delhi's SWM system should integrate decentralised options for both wet and dry waste, backed by large processing facilities to ensure all the waste generated is scientifically processed. The city must also ensure existing processing facilities operate at full capacity, while new facilities are built to ensure no waste goes untreated. Finally, urban local bodies should also learn from best practices from other cities in India and abroad on efficient SWM processing.

Pradeep Dadlani works with Sycom Projects and Consultants, Delhi, and is a senior SWM expert. Pushkara S.V. works with the Indian Institute for Human Settlements, Bengaluru, and is a practitioner in SWM.

THE GIST

In Delhi, considering an average per capita generation of about 0.6 kg/day per person, the city generates approximately 13,000 tonnes per day (TPD) of waste — roughly 1,400 truckloads — which adds up to about 42 lakh tonnes per annum.

The MCD faces several challenges in tackling waste within the city. One major issue is the lack of waste segregation at source. Many households and commercial establishments don't do this.

Delhi's SWM system should integrate decentralised options for both wet and dry waste, backed by large processing facilities to ensure all the waste generated is scientifically processed.

From Page One

'Infosys Prize now only for researchers aged up to 40'

From 2024, the six categories that the Infosys Prize will be awarded in are: Economics, Engineering & Computer Science, Humanities & Social Sciences, Life Sciences, Mathematical Sciences, and Physical Sciences.

IoT-enabled wheelchair device developed

The research work has been going on for two years now and after successfully testing the device with different people with varying height of 4.8 to 5.8 feet and weight up to 75kg, the study was recently published in IEEE Xplore.

The XoRehab is an exoskeleton for rehabilitation with nine Degree of Freedom (DoF), which essentially means the allowed joint movement in upper and lower limb. "This is a home-based rehabilitation device, and it is not necessary to shift a person from one device to another between upper and lower limb rehabilitation. It involves the development of well-trained robots on electromechanical actuation," the researchers said.

While physiotherapy is mostly mechanical and requires constant supervision from the caretaker to check if the patients are doing it the right way, the XoRehab eliminates the need for it due to its IoT enabled system. One of the main objectives of the researchers was to make this device as cost friendly as possible.

E-paper edition

The Hindu offers more coverage of Bengaluru in the e-paper edition. (epaper.thehindu.com)

In the issue dated May 16, we have an interview with Kris Gopalakrishnan, co-founder of Infosys and president of Infosys Science Foundation (ISF), who spoke to The Hindu after the foundation announced certain changes to the Infosys Prize. He explained that it is steering the Infosys Prize in a new direction by transitioning from a mid-career prize to an early-career prize, with the objective of rewarding potential and recognising the promise of future achievement.

Text & Context and Science

Weekday features on *The Hindu* epaper (epaper.thehindu.com) carries explainers, special articles and quizzes. In the latest issue (May 16, Thursday), the following articles are available:

- On Delhi's mounting waste crisis **bit.ly/delhiwastemanage**
- General, central obesities linked to higher risk of colorectal cancer **bit.ly/riskcolorectalcancer**

You can use your smartphone's inbuilt features to access these articles. If it's an Android phone, use Google Lens to read and tap the url to access an article. If it's an iPhone, use Live Text on camera to do the same.

Tele MANAS helpline sees an increase in number of calls

While the helpline used to receive around 3,000 calls in a month from the 15 to 30 age group a year ago, it is now receiving around 9,500 calls per month on average

Jahnavi T. R.
BENGALURU

A young adult woman who was distressed by an interpersonal relationship reached out to Tele MANAS. She was also worried about the issue cropping up at a time when exams were around the corner. A team counselled her for nearly an hour.

"The caller's needs were kept as a priority, and as she preferred speaking to a woman, the call was transferred to the on-call female psychiatrist on the Tele MANAS cell team after preliminary assessment," said Dr. Naveen Kumar C., Professor of Psychiatry and Head of Community Psychiatry at NIMHANS talking about the nature of calls received by Tele MANAS, the toll-free government, mental health helpline. The helpline has seen an increase in the number of calls it receives from those aged 15-30, including this patient.

According to the International Institute of Information Technology Bangalore (IIITB), the technological partner for the helpline, approximately 1,13,500 calls have been received from those within this age group since October 2022. While the helpline used to receive around 3,000 calls in a month from this age group a year ago, it is now receiving around 9,500 calls per month on average. "As the number of calls to the helpline increased, so did the calls from the age group," said T.K. Srikanth, Principal Investigator from IIITB.

"The age is recorded if the caller provides that information. We do not ask them if they are students unless they volunteer that information. Individuals make some calls on behalf of the person who might need help. We have not included those calls in our counts," Mr. Srikanth said.

Issues such as sleep disturbances, heightened stress levels, low mood, anxiety over potential failure, and concerns regarding parental reactions are commonly reported on the helpline.
GETTY IMAGES

Sleep disturbances

These callers' concerns usually pertain to exam stress. Mr. Srikanth said students sometimes seek assistance with exam preparation, time management, and related concerns. He also said that issues such as sleep disturbances, heightened stress levels, low mood, fear of inadequate studying, anxiety over potential failure, and concerns regarding parental reactions are commonly reported on the helpline.

"In some distressing instances, students express thoughts of death, particularly following exam failures or fears of failing. Tele MANAS promptly provides counselling support in such critical situations, offering necessary referrals and follow-ups," he added. He also said many students have provided positive feedback and have reached out for further assistance.

9.27 lakh calls

Since its inception, the 24/7 helpline has received 9.27 lakh calls from across the country. NIMHANS is the nodal centre for the helpline.

In April, the University Grants Commission urged all Higher Education Institutions (HEI) to widely publicise the mental health helpline. The teams behind Tele MANAS have also taken several steps to publicise the helpline among students.

Talking to *The Hindu*, Dr. Naveen Kumar C., Professor of Psychiatry and Head of Community Psychiatry at NIMHANS, said, "Given the prevalence of younger callers, particularly students and young professionals, it becomes imperative to address the mental health needs of this demographic. Efforts are being made to disseminate information, education, communication materials and outreach programmes in educational institutions aimed at raising awareness and promoting preventive measures."

Student who died on on university campus allegedly jumped to his death

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A day after a student from PES University lost his life on their Electronics City campus, the boy's parents have alleged that he jumped to his death from the college building. The 21-year-old BE (Computer Science) student Rahul K. died after falling from the sixth floor of the building on Tuesday (May 14) morning.

"Based on the complaint from his father, we have filed an unnatural death report under Section 174 of the Criminal Procedure Code. We are probing the case, and more details will be revealed as the investigation proceeds," said C.K. Baba, Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), southeast division.

This is the fourth such incident at PES University in one year, three of which occurred on the same campus. Meanwhile, the university's students took to social media about the recent tragic incidents. In posts that went viral, many students alleged that Rahul took the extreme step after being told that he would not be allowed to write the exam because he arrived late at the hall.

"The student was a third-year student whose exam was at 8.30 a.m.. He arrived at 9 a.m., was not allowed to write the end semester exam, and was even told he would get a backlog and wouldn't be able to sit for placements," a student claimed on social media. Students also alleged that the university carried on with the day without addressing the unfortunate incident on the campus. They also demanded that the university should conduct a thorough investigation into the matter and provide mental health support to the students affected by it.

The university, however, denied these allegations. "In all our institutions we have an assessment centre where exams are taken. Rahul never came to that building. Even his mother said that he left home early and came to the university by two-wheeler. After the incident, we informed his parents, and we declared a holiday for the students who had witnessed it. But exams went on as scheduled," said J. Surya Prasad, Vice-Chancellor, PES University.

Speaking about Rahul, he said, "He was a cheerful student and was improving ever since the first semester. He had good internal marks too. He reportedly missed out on an examination last week and he told the coordinator that he had to go to his native place to sign some papers. He was told to write the exam later as we do not have the system to penalise students if they fail to write exams. What happened is very disturbing and shocking."

(Those in distress or those having suicidal tendencies can call Arogya Sahayavani Ph.: 104 for help.)

Chinnaswamy stadium canteen staffers booked

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Cubbon Park police recently registered an FIR against those manning the canteen at M. Chinnaswamy Stadium for allegedly serving sub-standard food, which a 23-year-old private firm employee claimed caused food poisoning. Based on a complaint by Chaithanya C.S.K., a resident of Vidyaranyapura, the police have charged two persons with negligent conduct with respect to poisonous substance. The victim, along with his friends, had gone to watch an IPL match between Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Delhi Capitals. Mr. Chaithanya, in his complaint, said that he had ordered ghee rice, idli, cutlet, channa masala, and dry jamuns from the canteen at the stand which, he alleged, caused food poisoning.

Water adalat today

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) will hold a water adalat on May 16 between 9.30 a.m. and 11 a.m. to address grievances relating to water billing, delays in providing water supply and sanitary connections, delays in converting from domestic to non-domestic connections, and other related issues.

According to a BWSSB release, the adalat will be held at the following sub-divisions: North West-2; Central-1-2; (South-1)-2; (South West-2); (South West-5); (East-1)-3; and (East-2)-3.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to bring to the notice of the general public that my client **Sri Manjunatha Reddy P G, S/o Gopala Reddy T,** Residing at No 01, K Pathur, Kurigepalli, Kolar, Karnataka 563134. Is absolute owner of the schedule property, My client intended to raise the funds in respect of the schedule property, The schedule Property was purchased from **Smt Ashwathamma W/o Late Lakshmanappa and others** in the year 2019, Date 06.02.2019 through Sale Deed registered before the sub registrar office Banaswadi Bangalore, vide registered no BNS-18880-2018-19, stored in CD No BNS701, Book 1, dated 12.02.2019, If Anyone Person/s, firm/ company / institution / organization or establishment, is/are having any right, title, interest, claim, share, or objections in respect of schedule property hereby required / request to intimate in writing to the undersigned advocate or may contact the undersigned advocate with documentary proof, within **7 days** hereof, and An claim made after the stipulated period, will not be considered, it will be presumed that there is/are no claims and will not be valid, same shall be null & void, such person/s shall be considered as waived and not binding on my Client.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the Residential Immovable property bearing **site No 7,** old Property no 83, New Property no 134/1, Katha No 250, Situated at **Baiyappanahalli Village, Bidarahalli, Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk, Bangalore** Measuring East to West 26.5 Feet & north to South 40 Feet in all measuring **1060 Sqfeet ,**
East by : Site No 6, West by : Road, North by: 25 feet Road, South by : Site No.10.

B. Shubhakar BA LL.B., Advocate
#601, Old Police Station Road,
Next to Srinivasa poly clinic,
Krishnarajapuram, Bangalore 560036
Mobile: + 91 9448950488,
email : shubhakar14@gmail.com

Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Private Limited
5th Floor, Plot No. 137, Sector- 44 I Gurgaon- 122002 Ph: 0124 - 4527200

Appendix IV (See Rule 8 (1)
POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property)

Whereas,

The Authorised Officer of The Vishweshwar Sahakari Bank Ltd, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 ('SARFAESI Act'), and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) of the SARFAESI Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 ('Rules'), issued a Demand Notice dated **13.11.2018** calling upon the borrower and guarantors **1). M/s Sandeep Textiles** Prop.:- Shri. Sandeep Shivnath Sahani (Borrower), **2). Mr Vijay Baburao Ginde** (Guarantor) **3). Mr Shivnath Puran Sahani** (Guarantor), **4). Mr Rohit Ghanshyam Savalani** (Guarantor), and **5). Mr Omprakash Jagganth Jangid** (Guarantor) to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being **Rs.47,60,482.00 (Rupees Forty Seven Lakhs Sixty Thousand Four Hundred and Eighty Two Only) as on 31.10.2018** together with future interest and costs from **01.11.2018 till date of repayment within 60 days** from the date of receipt of the said notice.

And whereas, the Financial Assets with respect to the loan(s) availed by said borrower and guarantors from The Vishweshwar Sahakari Bank Ltd. have since been acquired by Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Pvt. Ltd. under Section 5 of the SARFAESI Act vide Assignment Agreement dated 20.02.2019 thereby acquiring all rights, titles and interests of The Vishweshwar Sahakari Bank Ltd therein including underlying securities

The borrower/guarantors having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given by the Authorised Officer of Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Pvt. Ltd. to the borrower/guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on me under Section 13(4) of the SARFAESI Act read with Rule 8 of the Rules on this **11th day of May 2024.**

The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Pvt. Ltd. for an amount of **Rs. 70,62,564.00 (Rupees Seventy Lakhs Sixty Two Thousand Five Hundred and Sixty Four Only)** as on **30.11.2023** together with future interest and costs from **01.12.2023.**

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the SARFAESI Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

Description of the Immovable Property

Property No.1
All that piece and parcel of property situated lying and being within local limits of Ichalkaranji Shahapur Municipal Council bearing R.S.No. 373, out of which Plot No. 17, having total area 129.3 Sq. Mtrs and constructed thereon building (its City Survey No 20069 out of which plot No. 17 admeasuring 129.30 Sq. Mtrs and its Ichalkaranji Municipal Council, Ichalkaranji assessment No. 381, admeasuring 65.39 Sq. Mtrs. Builtup area). Bounded as follows:
To East: Plot No.18
To West: Plot No.16
To South: 27' Road
To North: Plot No.6

Property No.2
All that piece and parcel of Plot No. 79 out of R.S.No.260/A/1, Corresponding to VPC. No. 1038 admeasuring about 316.54Sq.Mtr. along with construction upon it about 165.58 Sq.Mtr, The Nipani Co-Op. Industrial Estate Ltd., Village- Jatrat, Tal Chikodi, Dist . Belgaum.along with 25 KVA Transformer Center/20HP MP. Bounded as follows:-
To East : Plot No.55
To West : 30 ft Road
To South : 30 ft Road
To North : Plot No.78

Place: Nipani / ICHALKAARANJI
Date:11.05.2024
Padmakumar S
(Authorized Officer)
Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Pvt. Ltd.

Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Private Limited
5th Floor, Plot No. 137, Sector- 44 I Gurgaon- 122002 Ph: 0124 - 4527200

Appendix IV (See Rule 8 (1)
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The Authorised Officer of The Vishweshwar Sahakari Bank Ltd, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 ('SARFAESI Act'), and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) of the SARFAESI Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 ('Rules'), issued a Demand Notice dated **13.11.2018** calling upon the borrower and guarantors **1). M/s Usha Textiles** Prop.:- Sou Usha Shivnath Sahani (Borrower), **2). Mr Vijay Baburao Ginde** (Guarantor) **3). Mr Shivnath Puran Sahani** (Guarantor), **4). Mr Rohit Ghanshyam Savalani** (Guarantor), **5). Mr Omprakash Jaggannth Jangid** (Guarantor) and **6) Shri Sandeep Shivnath Shahani** to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being **Rs.47,21,985.00 (Rupees Forty Seven Lakhs Twenty One Thousand Nine Hundred and Eighty Five Only) as on 31.10.2018** together with future interest and costs from **01.11.2018** till date of repayment within **60 days** from the date of receipt of the said notice.

And whereas, the Financial Assets with respect to the loan(s) availed by said borrower and guarantors from The Vishweshwar Sahakari Bank Ltd. have since been acquired by Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Pvt. Ltd. under Section 5 of the SARFAESI Act vide Assignment Agreement dated 20.02.2019 thereby acquiring all rights, titles and interests of The Vishweshwar Sahakari Bank Ltd therein including underlying securities

The borrower/guarantors having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given by the Authorised Officer of Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Pvt. Ltd. to the borrower/guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on me under Section 13(4) of the SARFAESI Act read with Rule 8 of the Rules on this **11th day of May 2024.**

The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Pvt. Ltd. for an amount of **Rs. 62,90,785.00 (Rupees Sixty Two Lakhs Ninety Thousand Seven Hundred and Eight Five Only)** as on **30.11.2023** together with future interest and costs from **01.12.2023.**

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the SARFAESI Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

Description of the Immovable Property

Property No.1
All that piece and parcel of property situated lying and being within local limit of Ichalkaranji Shahapur Municipal Council bearing R.S. No.373, out of which plot No.14 having total admeasuring area 110.4 Sq. Mtr and constructed thereon building (its City survey No.20069 out of which Plot no.14, admeasuring 110.4 Sq. Mtr and its Ichalkaranji Municipal Council, Ichalkaranji assessment No.428/3, Admeasuring 71.10 Sq. Mtr ,built up area) Bounded as Follows-
To East- Property of Shri Krushna Harwade
To West- Govt. Road
To South- Property of Shri Lapte
To North- 20" Road

Property No.2
All that piece and parcel of Plot No. 79 out of R.S.No.260/A/1, Corresponding to VPC. No. 1038 admeasuring about 316.54Sq.Mtr. along with construction upon it about 165.58 Sq.Mtr, The Nipani Co-Op. Industrial Estate Ltd., Village- Jatrat, Tal Chikodi, Dist . Belgaum.along with 25 KVA Transformer Center/20HP MP. Bounded as follows:-
To East : Plot No.55
To West : 30 ft Road
To South : 30 ft Road
To North : Plot No.78

Place: Nipani / ICHALKAARANJI
Date:11.05.2024
Padmakumar S
(Authorized Officer)
Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Pvt. Ltd.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY G20

Tender Notice No: LD_LC_Sig_Alt/2024-25-03 Dated : 11.05.2024.

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders for the following work.

Name of the Work	Approx. Value
Sub Work-1 :	**Rs. 4,03,43,788/-**

Alteration to existing Electronic Interlocking System (MEDHA Make) with additional Goomty towards SVTN end including Outdoor Signalling Works at LONDA Jn. Station in connection with Additional line work of Hubballi Division of South Western Railway. **Sub Work-2 :** Alteration to existing Electronic Interlocking System (MEDHA Make) at GUDGERI Station in connection with Closure of LC No-266 and LC No-267 of Hubballi Division of South Western Railway. **Sub Work-3 :** Alteration to existing Electronic Interlocking System (MEDHA Make) at DHARWAD Station in connection with Closure of LC No-299 and LC No-300 of Hubballi Division of South Western Railway.

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 15:00 Hrs on 03-06-2024**

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

Deputy Chief Signal & Telecom Engineer / Construction
PUB/81/AAS/PRB/SWR/2024-25 **Hubballi**
South Western Railway - SWR SWRRLY SWRRLY

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client **SRI.N.SAGAR AND SRI.NAGARAJA.A** intend to purchase the schedule property, this is to brings to the notice of general public that the Original Allotment Letter issued by BDA in the name of **Sri Vishwanath Reddy.P,** vide No.BDA/ADM/DS-3/242/GB/2/2000-01, dated 26.12.2000 with respect of Vacant Site No.242, Situated at Gnanabharathi (Valagerahalli), 2nd Block, in a layout formed in BDA, presently comes under the jurisdiction of BBMP ward No.130, new address as per BBMP records No.242, Gnana Bharathi, 1, 2 & 3rd Block, Valagerahalli (BDA) Block 2nd, Bangalore, measuring East to West **9.15 mtrs** and North to South **6.10 mtrs,** total measuring **55.815 Sq.mtrs,** the previous owner Sri.D.Shivalingaiah has lost at the time of travelling. My Client intend to avail loan from SBI, Kengeri Branch Bangalore.

Any person or persons having/asserting any right title or interest/claims or intending to oppose the purchase in any manner may file their objections to the undersigned within **seven days** from the publication of Notice hereof with documentary proof where after no such claims will be entertained and my client will proceed with the purchase of the said property. Police Complaint is also given vide Lost Report No.152085/2020, dated 24.11.2020.

Y. Sowmya Yadav, Advocate
Samvruddhi Legal, # 83, Ground Floor,
5th 'A' Cross, 21st Main, J.P. Nagar
2nd Phase, Bangalore-78. **M : 9916343921**

PUBLIC NOTICE

Mrs.SINDHU MANJUNATH, C/o. Manjunath Krishnappa, residing at No.51/1, 2nd Cross, R.V.Shetty Layout, VTC, Seshadripuram Post, Seshadripuram, Bangalore North, Bangalore-560020, intends to purchase the below mentioned property from **Mrs.CHOODAMANI,** W/o R.Nagaraj, residing at No.14, 8th Cross, Kempanna Layout, Cholanayakanahalli, R.T. Nagar Post, Bangalore-560032 **(VENDOR).**

Any person/s, Bank(s)/Financial institutions or any other authority concerned having or claiming in any manner of right or title , by way of sale, exchange, gift, inheritance, possession, trust, lease, mortgage, lien or interest or objection or otherwise howsoever, in to or upon the Schedule Property, is hereby requested to inform the same in writing supported by documentary evidence to the undersigned within SEVEN DAYS from the date of publication hereof, failing which all rights or claims, if any, shall be deemed to have been waived and PURCHASER shall proceed with the conveyance and obtain the Deed of Absolute Sale of the Schedule Property, as if no valid claims are subsisting against the Schedule Property.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of the residential immovable property being Southern portion bearing Corporation No.2/3-1, PID No.99-59-2/3-1, Old No.42 and 170, situated at 1st Main Road, Rajmahal Palace Guttahalli, Bangalore, together with building consisting of 500 Square Feet commercial shop in the Ground Floor, 450 Square Feet residential house and 100 Square Feet residential house in the Second Floor with common stair case and the building is built of RCC roofing, brick wall with cement, teak wood doors and windows, vitrified flooring, common passage with water, light and sanitation and including all rights, privileges and appurtenances thereto, together with building constructed on entire site measuring:

East to West
On the Northern side : 32 Feet
On the Southern side : 14.9 Feet
North to South
On the Eastern side : 23 Feet
On the Western side : 15 + 15 Feet
Total Area : 621 Square Feet
And bounded as follows :
East by : Road
West by : Private Property
North by : Property No.170 of Northern portion
South by : Road

GR ASSOCIATES
Mr.A.P.GURURAJ, Advocate,
No.2919/9, 13th Main Road, 'D' Block
2nd Stage, Rajajinagar, Bangalore-560010
M: 9980100658
Bangalore Date-15.05.2024

PUBLIC NOTICE

The general public are hereby informed that my client has agreed to purchase from **Smt.Renuka Nagaraj W/o Sri.Nagaraja.H,** residing at No.1583, Abhishta, 2nd Main, 6th Cross, Judicial Layout, GKVK Post, Yelahanka, Bengaluru-560065, **Site No.2A,** House List Katha No.413, old Katha No.1487/413/2A, Present BBMP Katha No.70/1487/413/2A, carved out of Sy.No.70 (which originally belongs to Sri.Marishamappa, Jacob, Sandyagappa all being sons of late.Arulappa and Smt.Ronikyamma W/o.late.Chinnappa) converted for residential use vide O.M. Bearing No.BDis/ALN/SR(SA)293/95-96 dated 20-06-1996 by the Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore District, situated at **Royal Enclave, Rachenahalli Village, K.R.Puram Hobli, Bengaluru East Taluk, Bengaluru District,** which is more fully described in the schedule herein below. Any persons/ firm/ company/ bank/ financial institution etc. having any right/claim of any nature over the schedule property or any portion thereof in any manner may lodge his/her/their claim/ objection in writing to the undersigned within **14 days** hereof along with copies of all the documents being relied upon, as otherwise my client will proceed to purchase the schedule property as if there are no claims/ objections from any person/s.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of property being vacant **Site No.2A,** House List Katha No.413, old Katha No.1487/413/2A, Present BBMP Katha No.70/1487/413/2A, carved out of Sy.No.70, converted for residential use vide O.M.Bearing No.BDis/ALN/SR(SA)293/95-96 dated 20-06-1996 by the Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore District, situated at **Royal Enclave, Rachenahalli Village, K.R.Puram Hobli, Bengaluru East Taluk, Bengaluru District,** now within BBMP Ward No.6, measuring:
East to West : 60 feet
North to South : 46 feet
In all measuring 2760 Sq.ft. or 256.41 Sq.Mtrs and bounded on the :
East by : House Site No.1.
West by : Road.
North by : Road.
South by : House Site No.2B, 3 & 4.

(K.Somasekhar Reddy)
Advocate
No.1, 1st Floor, M.C.Plaza
1st Main Road, 1st Cross
Ganganagar, Bangalore-560 032
Phone No. : 9448381245

Jharkhand Urja Sancharan Nigam Ltd.
(CIN: U40108JH2013SGC001704)
Regd. Office: 2nd Floor, JUSNL (SLDC) Building, Kusai Colony, Doranda, Ranchi-02
(E-mail:cetjusnl@gmail.com)

3rd TIME EXTENSION NOTICE

Important date against NIT No. **737/PR/JUSNL/2023-24** for Procurement of Battery Set for various GSS in JUSNL is hereby extended in following manner : -

End date and time of upload of BID	30.05.2024 up to 04:00 PM
BID Opening date for technical & commercial part	31.05.2024 at 04.00 PM

This extension notice is also available on the website www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in

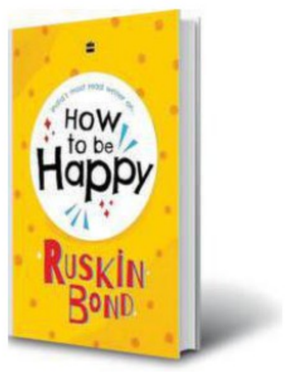
. स्वहित एवं राष्ट्रहित में ऊर्जा बचावें। कृपया अपनी शिकयतों को 18003456570(कॉल सेन्टर) पर दर्ज करायें।

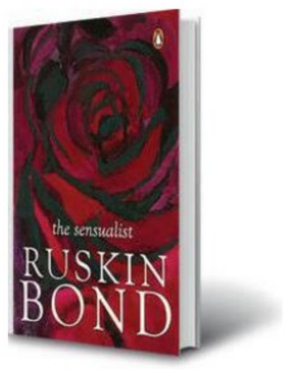
PR No. 322880

Sd/-
General Manager, C&M (NWBP)
JUSNL,Ranchi

PR 324844 Jharkhand Urja Sancharan Nigam Ltd(24-25)#D

BIBLIOGRAPHY





Indian author Ruskin Bond. FILE PHOTO

A writer who offers 'a note of cheerfulness in a world of conflict and uncertainty'

Ruskin Bond's first book for children, 'Angry River', came out in 1972. He has not stopped writing since; his books do not go out of print and are perennial favourites. The prolific writer turns 90 on May 19, with the launch of two new books

R. Krithika

"Who is your favourite author?" I asked some children at a library in Coimbatore recently. "Ruskin Bond," was the chorus. The answer to his unwavering fan base lies, perhaps, in these lines that open *The Hill of Enchantment* (Aleph/2024): If a writer wishes to create a little magic with his pen he must find a little magic in his life. In this book, Bond opens up about "the magic in his life" that shaped him into the beloved author that he is, both among children and adults.

Given his prolific output, there is a bit of repetition. But you also get to read his first poem, written as a schoolboy, and his classmates' reactions to it. To those who bemoan the decreasing number of readers today, Bond advises them to think again: "Those who think there aren't many book readers around today would be surprised to know that there were even fewer circa 1950. In a class of twenty, there were only two who actually read any books..." The last line probably holds true even today. Reading his books is almost like seeing what he is writing about. Here is the answer to that: "I have a good visual memory, and the past – especially those childhood years – comes back to me in the form of pictures." The *Hill of Enchantment* is like taking a walk with Bond through the important chapters of his life and returning to Ivy Cottage in Mussoorie and watching the fairy lights of Pari Tibba through his window.

Sagely advice

How to be Happy (HarperCollins, 2024), as the title indicates, has the author offering "a note of cheerfulness" for his readers who live "in a world of conflict and uncertainty". Bond's advice is what you'd expect from a loving grandfather who has lived a full life and been through a lot. "Happiness will come if you don't run after it," he writes. His prescriptions are not new but reading them through the lens of his experiences makes you think. One set that is sure to make some parents happy is "Make your own beds, dust your room, your desk, your books."

But what stayed with me was this: "Pursue your passion. But passion by itself isn't enough. It must be backed by the honing of our skills and the aim for perfection. ... We fall short of it, of course. But the striving for perfection often does lead to glory." Today, when "pursue your passion" is a mantra, the latter bit about honing skills and aiming for perfection is often forgotten leaving quite a few adrift in the choppy sea of life.

Angry River (1972) was his first children's work, first published in England and later in India by Puffin. Sita lives with her grandparents on a small island. During the monsoon, her grandmother falls ill and has to be taken to a hospital. Left alone, Sita keeps busy feeding the hens and cleaning the hut. But the rains don't stop and the river begins to rise. Sita climbs up a tree as the mud banks begin to crumble against the water's onslaught. "The river was very angry, it was like a wild beast, a dragon on the rampage, thundering down from the hills and sweeping across the plain, bringing with it dead animals, uprooted trees, house hold goods, and huge fish choked to death by swirling mud " Rescued by Krishan who is on his boat, Sita manages to reach Shahganj to find her grandmother dead. "And she knew then that it would be her shoulder that Grandfather would have to lean on in the years to come."

On the one hand, Sita is child enough to talk to her doll and liken Krishan to the god Krishna her grandmother used to tell tales about. On the other is her maturity in taking care of the house and even rebuilding it. Read today in the light of the impact of climate change on the marginalised and vulnerable, it seems uncannily prescient.

Through the years

As a youngster, Bond left India for England but returned in just two years. But his homesickness gave birth to two novels: *The Room on the Roof* (which won the John Llewellyn Rhys Prize) and its sequel *Vagrants in the Valley*. Both follow the adventures of Rusty, a young Anglo-Indian boy who runs away from his strict guardian. While the first ends with Rusty and his one-time student setting off to Dehra, the second sees Rusty growing in maturity and finally selling his father's first edition of *Alice in Wonderland* to leave India for England.

Interestingly, the American selling steel ploughs to Indian farmers, who appears in *Vagrants...*, was drawn from Bond's own experience of working with CARE, an American relief organisation, while he lived in Delhi before heading back to the mountains.

The only time Bond got into trouble with his writing was with *The Sensualist*. Published in Debonair, the author was hauled to court on charges of obscenity. The story has an unnamed narrator telling a traveller about how he became obsessed with sex and finally loses everything. Though Bond calls it "a partial exercise in the erotic", the story is also an exploration of how people struggle with internal demons and self-destruct.

Over the years, Ruskin Bond has made us laugh, cry, shiver with fright and more. As he celebrates his 90th birthday, what more can one wish him except "More power to your pen!"

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

A little more than a century ago, just flying across a patch of the Atlantic Ocean was a matter of great pride. A quiz on some of the first attempts to make it across the Atlantic

Vasudevan Mukunth

QUESTION 1

A 105 years ago this month, an aviator named _____ ____ attempted the world's first transatlantic flight by flying from Long Island, New York, to Plymouth, England. Many didn't accept this accomplishment because it consisted of six stops along the way and the aviator also switched planes at one point. Fill in the blanks.

QUESTION 2

The first transatlantic flight over the south Atlantic Ocean happened in May-June 1922. Gago Coutinho and Sacadura Cabral flew on three Fairey III planes (in different segments) from _____ to Rio de Janeiro, a distance of nearly 8,400 km. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 3

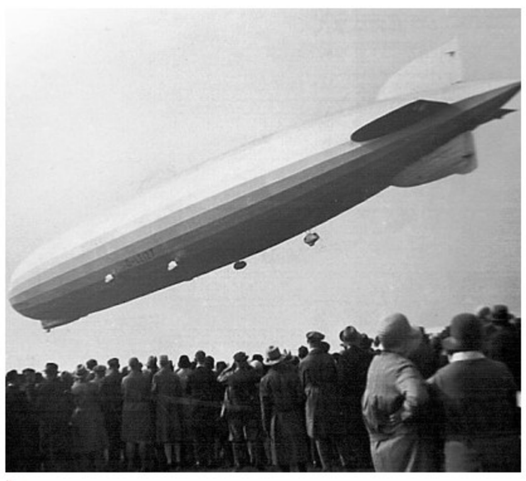
In April 1913, a newspaper in London, _____ ____, offered GBP 10,000 to the first aviator to undertake a transatlantic flight from anywhere in Canada, Newfoundland or the U.S. to anywhere in Great Britain or Ireland in 72 hours. Fill in the blanks.

QUESTION 4

In response to the award in Q2, X and Y took off from Newfoundland on June 14, 1919, on board a Vickers Vimy aircraft and landed in Galway, Ireland, roughly 15 hours later. En route, the duo braved fog, cold, a snowstorm, rain, and aircraft failures. Name X and Y.

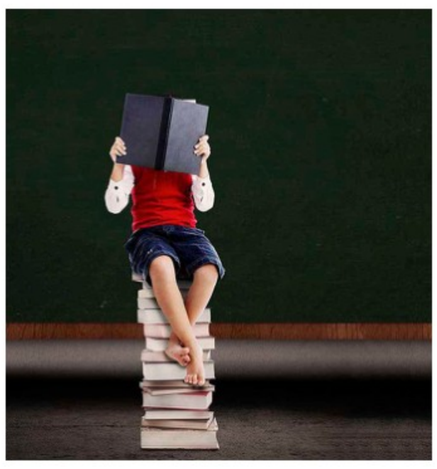
QUESTION 5

Name the American aviator who became famous for undertaking the first solo transatlantic flight in May 1927, flying from New York to Paris. In 1932, his son was involved in what many in the American press called the "crime of the century".



Visual question:
In this rigid airship, Hugo Eckener offered the world's first commercial transatlantic passenger service from 1928. Its name was Graf _____ ('Graf' is German for 'Count'). Fill in the blank.

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. The name initially decided for Mickey Mouse. **Ans: Mortimer Mouse**
2. Mickey Mouse made his public debut in this film. **Ans: Steamboat Willie**
3. This man voiced Mickey Mouse, in which he appeared to take great personal pride. **Ans: Walt Disney**
4. This figure has been identified by Disney as a source of inspiration for Mickey Mouse. **Ans: Charlie Chaplin**
5. Mickey's signature closing line. **Ans: "See ya real soon!"**
6. This American President jokingly referred to Mickey as "a world leader who has bigger ears than me". **Ans: Barack Obama**
Visual: The relevance of this badge in the U.S. presidential elections. **Ans: Mickey Mouse has been historically a popular choice for write-in votes to indicate protest voting**
Early Birds: K.N. Viswanathan| Rajmohan. V| Saheni George| Lekshmy Harikumar| Sadhan Kumar Panda



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

K. Subrahmanian

"Tryst (Devesh Chandra, Delhi)"

"This is an archaic word. It means 'a time and place for a meeting, especially of lovers'. Jawaharlal Nehru used this word in his famous Independence Day Speech on August 15, 1947. 'We made a tryst with Destiny...'. It would seem he wanted to use the word 'date'. As 'date' also means 'an engagement or appointment, especially with a person of the opposite sex', he dropped it. He chose the archaic word 'tryst' whose meaning is not very different from that of 'date'. Perhaps he thought 'tryst' was better, more dignified than 'date'. 'Tryst' rhymes with 'list'."

"Not to be ministered unto, but to minister (P. Alexander Xavier, Calicut)"

"It means 'not to be served, but to serve'.

Christ said that he had come not to be served by others but to render service to others. The word 'minister' originally meant 'servant'. 'Ministers' and 'administrators' are expected to serve the people. It was expected that service would be their motto. But these are the days of supermarkets and self-service."

"Licenced, licensed (I. M. Bhasker, Embassy of India, Seoul)"

In British English, licence is used as a noun and license as a verb. Poetic licence, gun licence.

This hotel is licensed to sell alcoholic drinks.

Occasionally, one comes across 'licenced'. But generally 'license' is used as a verb in British English. In American English, 'license' is used both as noun and verb."

"Bye-election, by-election (R. Nandakumar, Thanjavur)"

"Modern dictionaries record only 'by-election'. So stick to this spelling. 'By' here means 'subordinate, incidental, secondary'. 'By-election' is not 'general election' but 'a special election held between regular elections to fill a position whose former holder has left it or died'. A by-election is a secondary election."

"Botanical garden, botanic garden (Lakshmanan Ramani, Hyderabad)"

"Both are acceptable. 'But botanical garden' is more widely used than 'botanic garden'"

"Wrought (L. Christudhas, Madras)"

"It is the past tense and past participle of 'work'. It is no longer used in this sense. It is used as an adjective in modern English. 'Wrought' means '(of metals) beaten out or shaped by hammering'. It is also used figuratively.

This is a carefully wrought essay.

'Wrought iron' is iron 'that has been shaped into a useful form or a pleasing pattern'. 'Wrought-out' is used as an adjective to mean 'very nervous and excited'. It means 'overwrought'.

She could not say anything coherently. She was so overwrought.

On reading the letter, he became overwrought."

Published in The Hindu on December 17, 1991.

Word of the day

Appellative:
identifying word or words by which someone or something is called and classified or distinguished from others; pertaining to or dealing with or used as a common noun

Synonyms: designation, denomination, naming

Usage: *He knows the appellative function of some primitive rites.*

Pronunciation: bit.ly/appellativepro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /əˈpɛlətɪv/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

Security guard killed in accident

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 38-year-old security guard was killed and his friend injured when a lorry knocked down their scooter in Hennur police station limits on Wednesday. The deceased was identified as Kavi Sarki, a native of Nepal.

The police have registered a case of death due to negligence and rash and negligent driving against the lorry driver.

Timings
BENGALURU

THURSDAY, MAY. 16		
RISE	05:54	SET 18:38
RISE	13:02	SET 01:08
FRIDAY, MAY. 17		
RISE	05:54	SET 18:38
RISE	13:48	SET 01:44
SATURDAY, MAY. 18		
RISE	05:54	SET 18:39
RISE	14:32	SET 02:17

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	35	27
Mysuru	34	21
Bengaluru	30	21

Bengaluru Today
33°C Morning will be pleasant Day will be warm and humid. Night also will be comfortable. Chances of light rain and thundershower.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
34°C Weather will be warm with uneasy afternoon. Night will comfortable. Short spell of light rain and thundershower may occur at some places.

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THE HINDU
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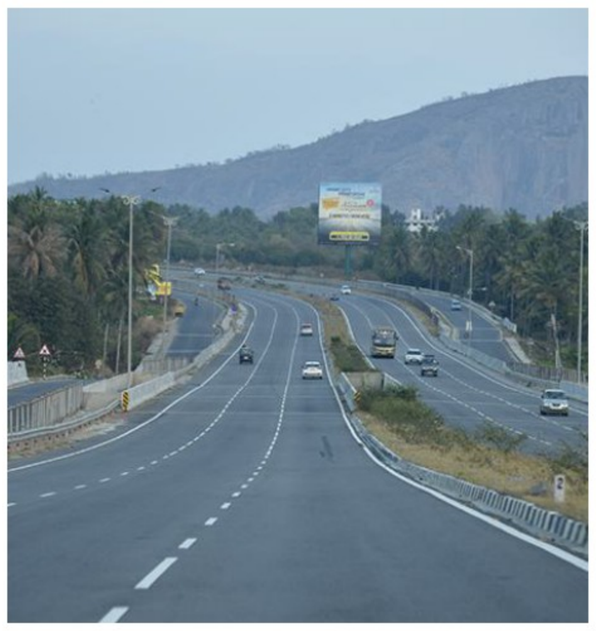
Bengaluru-Mysuru highway to get 60 AI-powered cameras

Officials said once the cameras are operational, the vehicle photos and number plates will be automatically captured, allowing authorities to penalise violators

Darshan Devaiah B.P.
BENGALURU



The NHAI approved the deployment of AI-based automatic number plate recognition cameras on the highway. BHAGYA PRAKASH K.

Owing to increasing instances of speeding and driving on the wrong side of the Bengaluru-Mysuru access-controlled highway, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has initiated the installation of 60 Artificial Intelligence-powered traffic enforcement cameras at strategic locations along both the Bengaluru-Nidaghatta and Nidaghatta-Mysuru stretches of the highway.

"At regular intervals along the highway, dedicated arches featuring solar-powered panels have been installed to accommodate cameras. Each side of these arches is equipped with five cameras and lane-wise speed limit indicators, enhancing surveillance to detect all kinds of violations on the stretch," a NHAI official said.

In February, the NHAI approved the deployment of AI-based Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras at six locations on the highway at a cost of ₹3.6 crore. These cameras, installed by Tecsidel India Private Limited, based in Gurugram, Haryana, will implement the Video Incident Detection and Enforcement System (VIDES) on the Bengaluru-Mysuru section of National Highway 275.

Officials said once the cameras are operational, the vehicle photos and number plates of will be automatically captured, allowing authorities to penalise violators.

Move welcomed

Meanwhile, motorists using the highway welcomed the initiative. Sidharth Ramkumar, a regular commuter from Bengaluru, said, "It's about time they cracked down on reckless driving.

These cameras will hopefully make people think twice before breaking the rules. I have noticed many people drive recklessly on this stretch, and lane discipline is very poor."

Another commuter, Prasanth R., from Kengeri, said, "I have witnessed numerous instances of people driving on the wrong side on this highway, which is extremely dangerous for other vehicles. Many videos capturing such violations on dash cameras go viral on social media. The police should also take note of these videos and penalize the offenders."

More cameras

The Bengaluru Traffic Police are also planning to install 25 Artificial intelligence-powered high-resolution speed trap enforcement cameras to monitor overspeeding vehicles on accident-prone stretches in the city. The police have already installed eight AI-powered speed trap cameras on the International Airport Road, one of the deadliest stretches in the city.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, M.N. Anucheth, Joint Commissioner (Traffic), Bengaluru, said they will install AI cameras on Airport Road, Electronic City Flyover, Outer Ring Road (ORR) between Nayandahalli and Goraguntepalya, and Mysuru Road.

"The locations where 25 cameras will be installed will be identified soon. AI-powered cameras will monitor vehicles exceeding the prescribed speed limit of 80 kmph. These cameras will automatically generate challans for violators," he added.

Minister orders probe into chopping of trees in Kodagu

THE HINDU IMPACT

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

According to environment activists, several trees have been felled and burned near the Talacauvery Sanctuary in the Mundrote Range of the Padinalkunadu Reserve Forest in Kodagu.

Minister for Ecology, Environment and Forest Eshwar Khandre has ordered a probe, led by Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forest, into alleged felling and burning of several trees near the Talacauvery Wildlife Sanctuary in the Mundrote range of the Padinalkunadu Reserve Forest in Kodagu district of Karnataka. The probe is the followup to a report "Greens alarmed as trees chopped and burnt near Talacauvery Wildlife Sanctuary in Kodagu", in the May 15 edition of *The Hindu*.

Environmentalists and activists in Kodagu have raised an alarm over the alleged destruction of trees. Members of the Kodagu Ekikarana Ranga, who recently visited the site, highlighted the issue and also lodged a complaint with the Forest Department. Following the complaint, the department registered an FIR and is conducting an investigation.

In an order dated May 15, Mr. Khandre stated that the media has highlighted the cutting down of numerous trees. According to the order, officials failed to apprise the Minister of the same.

"Immediately, an Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forest-level official should be sent to the spot to investigate how many trees have been cut, and submit a geo-tagged video and report in the next three days," he stated.

The Minister has also stated that disciplinary action is to be taken against officials who failed to inform his office about the incident.

Woman held for killing landlady

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Kengeri police cracked the murder case of 36-year-old woman and arrested her tenant who allegedly strangled her landlady to death to rob her valuables while she was at home along with her two-year-old child.

The accused Monika, a native of Kolar works as a data entry operator at a private firm and was a tenant at Divya's house in Konasandra for the past two months. She had introduced her male friend as her husband who was a driver by profession and used to visit her house often.

Investigations revealed that Monika was caught in a debt trap and was also planning to buy a goods vehicle for her male friend to start his own business.

The police who initiated a probe questioned Monika who misled the police stating that she was having a bath and kept to herself in the house. She also told the police that two people had come to ask for the house on rent. The police however crossed checked the information and verified the CCTV footage to find that there were no visitors and that Monika was lying.

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Rebellion and confusion among BJP and JD(S) in three segments

The BJP, which had announced candidates to five of the six Legislative Council seats leaving one to the Janata Dal (Secular), will likely give up another seat, making the seat-sharing formula 4:2

COUNCIL POLLS

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU/MYSURU

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which had announced candidates to five of the six Legislative Council seats leaving one to its alliance partner the Janata Dal (Secular), will likely give up another seat to its partner making the seat-sharing formula to 4-2. Six Council seats go to polls on June 3.

Indicating confusion between the parties, E.C. Ningaraju, who was given ticket for South Teachers' constituency by the BJP, filed his nominations on Wednesday.

Hours before this, the JD (S) supremo H.D. Deve Gowda issued the 'B' form to its candidate Vivekananda to contest from the constituency.

Even as Mr. Ningaraju ruled out the possibility of the party asking him to withdraw from the race, sources in the party said he would likely be made to withdraw in favour of the JD(S).

"The alliance had decided on a 4:2 seat sharing formula, which B.S. Yediyurappa had also announced hours before the party high command announced candidates for five seats on May 11. There was some miscommunication, which has been sorted out now. The South Teachers' constituency was anyway represented by the the JD(S) and it has a stronger base there. Mr. Vivekananda will be the NDA candidate from the seat," said a senior BJP leader.

JD(S) supremo H.D. Deve Gowda handing over the 'B' form to Vivekananda in Bengaluru on Wednesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Confirming this, late on Wednesday, the BJP in Mysuru acknowledged the JD (S) nominee as the NDA candidate for the South Teachers constituency. In a statement here, the Mysuru unit of the BJP has convened a meeting of the BJP workers at Govinda Rao Memorial Hall in the city before Mr. Vivekananda, the NDA candidate, files his nomination papers.

To confound the confusion already prevailing among the alliance partners, the JD(S) leader and former MLC K.T. Srikante Gowda, who was also a strong aspirant for the regional party's ticket to contest from South Teachers' constituency, declared that he will be filing his nomination papers from the constituency on Thursday, which is the last date for filing nominations.

Mr. Srikante Gowda took to his social media account to declare himself as a candidate of the NDA and called upon his supporters to gather at Kalamandira in Mysuru near the Regional Commissioner's office in the city, where he will be filing his nomination papers on Thursday.

> There was some miscommunication, which has been sorted out now. The South Teachers' constituency was anyway represented by the the JD(S) and it has a stronger base there. Mr. Vivekananda will be the NDA candidate from the seat.
> **A SENIOR BJP LEADER**

More 'rebels' in the fray

In another instance of confusion, the BJP leader from Mangaluru S.R. Harish Acharya filed his nomination papers for South West Teachers' constituency on Wednesday.

This was even after the seat had been allocated to the JD(S), which has fielded MLC Bhoje Gowda.

Meanwhile, former MLA K. Raghupathi Bhat, the sulking BJP leader from Udupi, has threatened to enter the fray as a "rebel" from South West Graduates' constituency against the saffron party's official candidate Dhananjaya Sarji.

While Mr. Harish Acharya, who filed his nomination papers for South West Teachers' constituency, cited the absence of representation to the coastal belt in either the Teachers' or Graduates' constituencies as a reason for his decision to contest against the JD(S) candidate S.L. Bhoje Gowda, Mr. Raghupathi Bhat, who had been denied the BJP ticket during the 2023 Assembly elections, said he was entering the fray from South West Graduates' constituency as the party workers were not satisfied with the "selection of the candidate" by the BJP.

Many Congress leaders vying for ticket to get elected to Council

Nagesh Prabhu
BENGALURU

As a dozen seats of the Legislative Council in Karnataka are falling vacant next month (June 17), senior and junior leaders of the Congress are vying for ticket to get elected to the Upper House of the State Legislature from the Legislative Assembly.

Leaders who have been denied ticket to contest the Legislative Assembly or the Lok Sabha elections have turned aspirants and those who joined the Congress on the eve of the Lok Sabha elections have been eyeing for a seat, sources in the Congress said.

Six BJP members, four from the Congress, and one JD(S) member are retiring this June 17. One seat is already vacant following the resignation of former Chief Minister Jagadish Shettar, who switched sides and contested the Lok Sabha elections from Belagavi on the BJP ticket.

The Congress, which has a strength of 136 members in the Assembly, can ensure victory in eight of the 12 seats, while the BJP and the JD(S) can secure three and one seat, respectively.

Top contenders

Sources in the Congress said Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's son Yathindra, who had vacated the Varuna constituency to his father in the 2023 Assembly elections, is the top contender for a ticket. Karadi Sanganna, MP, who quit the BJP and joined the Congress recently, and Karnataka NRI Forum deputy chairperson Arathi Krishna too have been lobbying for the seat.

> MLCs retiring this June 17
>
> Harish Kumar, K. Govindaraj, N.S. Boseraju, and Aravind Kumar Arali (all Congress); Tejaswini Gowda, K.P. Nanjundi, P.M. Muniraju Gowda, N. Ravi Kumar, S. Rudre Gowda and Raghunath Rao Malkapure (all BJP) and B.M. Farooq (JD-S)

Senior leaders, such as former Minister B.L. Shankar, V.R. Sudarshan, and Ivan D'Souza, too have been eyeing positions in the Council. These leaders have not contested elections in the recent past. A party functionary said the party is expected to renominate incumbent MLC and Minister N.S. Boseraju, MLCs Harish Kumar, K. Govindaraj, and Aravind Kumar Arali.

The party has reportedly promised a ticket to A.N. Nataraj Gowda, its visible face in the electronic media. There are close to 50 contenders and the party is likely to ensure a fair representation to all castes while nominating candidates, sources said.

Seats

Besides 12 seats, elections are scheduled to six Graduates' and Teachers' segments of the Council on June 3.

Out of six, three candidates, who have changed party allegiance, have been given a tickets. The party has fielded Ayanur Manjunath (South-West Graduates'), who quit the BJP and joined the Congress, while Marithibbe Gowda (South Teachers') quit the JD(S) during the Lok Sabha elections.

D.T. Srinivas, contesting from the South-East Teachers' constituency, is the husband of former BJP MLA Poornima Srinivas. The couple joined the Congress in October, 2023. Other three Congress nominees in the fray are K.K. Manjunath (South West Teachers'), Ramoji Gowda (Bengaluru Graduates') and Chandrashekara B. Patil (North East Graduates').

In 2018, the BJP won three, the JD(S) two, and the Congress one seat in these elections.

Why significant

Elections to these 18 seats have assumed significance for the ruling Congress. Speaking to *The Hindu*, the government's Chief Whip in the Council and KPCC working president Saleem Ahmed said: "The party is confident of winning all six seats and securing a majority in the Upper House in June."

Victory in at least nine seats would help the party to secure a majority in the Upper House. Currently, the party has 29 members. The combined Opposition, the BJP and the JD(S), have decided to fight against the Congress in the Council polls.

Intellectuals write to CM seeking immediate arrest of Prajwal

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

As many as 107 writers, intellectuals, and activists from Karnataka wrote an open letter to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Wednesday demanding the immediate arrest of incumbent Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna, who is facing an investigation under multiple sexual abuse charges.

Listing 16 demands, the letter stated that the alleged sexual abuse and rape cases have led to civil society hanging its head in shame. "It is a criminal offence to record and store about 2,900 videos and photos, threaten victims, and kidnap them," the letter stated.

'For political mileage'

Expressing concern that the sex abuse of this magnitude was being used for political mileage during elections by political parties and leaders, the letter said: "The irresponsible behaviour of political forces is downplaying the original crime and its consequences. Members of Prajwal Revanna's family, including his grandfather, father, mother, brother, uncle, and aunt, have held various positions such as the Prime Minister, the Chief Minister, and members of the State Legislature. The alleged crime has taken us back to the 19th century feudal set up that is against women."

"It is an insult to democracy that despite these episodes coming to light, the election for the Hassan Lok Sabha seat was not put off, and the accused was allowed to contest. Even after the crime came to light, the accused was allowed to go scot free between April 22 and April 26," the letter stated.

Senior writers and activists, including Vijaya, G. Ramakrishna, Vasundhara Bhupathi, K Shareefa, Sabiha Bhumi Gowda, Kale Gowda Nagawara, Nagesh Hegde, Meenakshi Baali, K.S. Vimala among others, are signatories of the letter.

'SIT did not record victim's statement even four to five days after she was rescued'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Special Court of Session for criminal cases related to MPs and MLAs has said that the Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Criminal Investigation Department had delayed recording the statement of the victim by four to five days after she was rescued in the alleged abduction case registered against former Minister H.D. Revanna.

Former Minister H.D. Revanna after he was released from jail in Bengaluru. PTI

Interestingly, the special court also said that *prima facie* there is no material to justify the rigorous Section 364-A (Kidnapping for ransom and threat to cause death or hurt, etc.,) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) invoked against Mr. Revanna in terms of the Supreme Court's interpretation of this provision.

However, the special court said that the ingredients of Section 362 (whoever by force compels, or by any deceitful means induces, any person to go from any place, is said to abduct that person) of the IPC, at best, could be pressed against him.

Santhosh Gajanan Bhat, judge of the special court, made these observations, which are limited for considering whether the accused was entitled for bail, in his May 13 order of allowing the bail plea of Mr. Revanna, who has been arraigned as Accused Number 1. Noticing from the SIT's records that though the victim was rescued on May 4 and Mr. Revanna was in the SIT's custody between May 5 and 8, the court pointed out that the SIT did not record her statement even under Section 161 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrpC) for four to five days.

The statement under Section 164 of the CrPC, which should have been recorded immediately, was not recorded before the magistrate even on May 8, the day on which the SIT requested the magistrate court to send Mr. Revanna to judicial custody, the court noted.

"...no materials have been produced to indicate that the investigating agency had in fact recorded the statement of the victim immediately after securing her. The aforesaid delay would clearly cast a serious aspersion with respect to existence of *prima facie* case," the court observed.

Though it has been argued that the entire incident had taken place only to shield the petitioner's son [Hassan Lok Sabha member Prajwal Revanna], who is accused of committing sexual assault on the victim, no materials have been found that Mr. Revanna had indeed acted to shield his son, the court said.

Apart from a stray allegation in the complaint that the Accused number 2 (Satish Babu) had insisted, at the behest of Mr. Revanna, the victim should accompany him, no materials are forthcoming, the court said.

Shahi Exports ties up with Taiwanese firm

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Shahi Exports, India's largest apparel manufacturer and exporter, announced a joint venture with Little King Global, one of Taiwan's premier synthetic sportswear fabric manufacturers.

As part of the joint venture, the company will set up a state-of-the-art processing unit for synthetic performance fabrics in Shivamogga.

The venture is expected to boost employment in Shivamogga, and the new facility would make Shahi one of the largest employers in the manufacturing sector in this region, it claimed.

The production line is set to be fully operational by the end of this year.

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CHANGE OF NAME

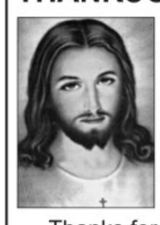
I, MOHAMMED SHAMIM, s/o Ghulam Waris, R/at Flat No – 203, Sajwah Enclave, No – 6, 6th Cross Road, Lingarajapuram, Bengaluru – 560084, have changed my name from MOHAMMED SHAMIM to MD SHAMIM vide affidavit dated 13th May 2024 sworn before Notary Meer Hassan Bengaluru.

I, AMI Manoj Kumar Bhuta, R/a No: 12/2, Madhav Bagh, Udani Layout, Cambridge Road, Halsur, Bangalore-560008 have changed my name to Ami Dhimant Valia vide affidavit dt: 13.05.2024 sworn before Notary Smt.A.Manjula, B'luru

PERSONAL

THANKSGIVING

THANKSGIVING



Thanks for all the blessings received.
- Dr. Maria Chacko & Family

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Doctors raise concerns over Covishield side effects

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A group of doctors under the banner of Awaken India Movement (AIM) have raised concerns over the side effects of Covishield vaccine in the wake of pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca admitting in a U.K. court that its vaccine can cause blood clots in rare cases.

Addressing a press conference here on Wednesday, the group urged the government to "review the science behind all COVID-19 vaccines, including Covishield, that were approved under emergency use authorisation and without completing clinical trials."

"We want the government to audit the commercialisation of COVID-19 vaccines as well as implement an active surveillance and monitoring mechanism to ensure vaccine adverse events are identified as early as possible," said Veena Raghava and Banu Prakash, doctors who are part of the group.

"The government has wholly ignored the rising number of cases of tragic deaths post-COVID vaccination," Dr. Prakash said.

"The world is learning about a side effect of the vaccine called Thrombosis with Thrombocytopenia Syndrome (TTS). But, the Indian government knew about it since May 2021. Snehal Lunawat, a 33-year-old frontline worker, died after getting Covishield. Her death has been confirmed by the National Adverse Events Following Immunisation (AEFI) Committee as a Vaccine Product Related Reaction death. The family asked Serum Institute for help, but they denied that their vaccine could cause TTS," he said.

ICICI Bank | Branch Office: ICICI Bank Limited, No.4/10, Mytree Centre, Hosur Road, Bommanahalli, Bengaluru- 560068

E-AUCTIONFOR SALE OF SECURED ASSET UNDER SARFAESI Act, 2002

The below immovable properties ("Secured Asset") mortgaged to ICICI Bank Limited ("Secured Creditor") will be sold by way of e-auction on June 19, 2024 from 10:00 P.M. to 12:00 P.M. on "As is where is", "As is what is", "Whatever there is" and "Without any recourse" basis, as per the brief particulars given hereunder:

Borrower/ Mortgagor(s)/ Guarantor(s)	Details of Secured Asset	Reserve Price
M/s. Shree Venkateshwara Agency, 107/58/1, Hanumanth Nagar, M V Seetharamaiah Road, 3rd Cross, Gavipuram Extension, Bengaluru-560019	Residential Property of extent 2,975 Sq.Ft, # Old No. 37, Present Municipal No.12, formed in Sy No. 35/1, 2, Sunkenahalli, II Stage Layout, III Main, Hanumanth Nagar, Bengaluru- 560019	Rs. 5.20 crore

This is an abridged notice for wider reach. For detailed public notice along with terms and conditions, please refer to the newspapers New Indian Express/ Kannada Prabha", Bangalore Edition dated May 05, 2024; and contact the undersigned on Phone No: 8971944211 between 11:00 A.M. to 05:00 P.M. on working days of the Bank.

Date: May 15, 2024
Place: Bangalore
Authorised Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

‘I would like to see the private sector spend more money on research’

We felt that it is important that we kind of look at the purpose for which the award is set up which is to promote world-class research in India, says Infosys co-founder

INTERVIEW

Kris Gopalakrishnan

Hemanth C.S.
BENGALURU

Kris Gopalakrishnan, co-founder of Infosys and president of Infosys Science Foundation (ISF), spoke to *The Hindu* after the foundation announced certain changes to the Infosys Prize which includes lowering the upper age limit to 40 years.

On Wednesday, ISF explained that it is steering the Infosys Prize in a new direction by transitioning from a mid-career prize to an early-career prize, with the objective of rewarding potential and recognising the promise of future achievement.

Infosys co-founders N.R. Narayana Murthy, S. Gopalakrishnan, and Pratima Murthy speaking on the changes in the Infosys Prize, at Infosys Science Foundation in Jayanagar. K. MURALI KUMAR

What is the rationale behind reviewing the Infosys Prize?
We have completed 15 years and we have had some successes. Our laureates have gone on to win bigger awards including the Fields Medal, the Nobel Prize etc. Still, we felt that it is important that we kind of look at the purpose for which the award is set up which is to promote world-class research in India and even more to science and research in the world. So, we felt that it is important that we kind of look at the purpose for which the award is set up which is to promote world-class research in India and whether we can do anything more in that review we decided that we will look at the early career of researchers and give them a longer runway after the recognition to contribute to science. Hopefully, these people are closer to the youth and can also be important icons because they are closer in age for our youth and will encourage more youth to take on careers in science. Ultimately the goal is to make sure India continues to contribute even more to science and research in the world.

What are changes that are being incorporated?
The main change is we have changed the age limit to 40 years so it is really an early career prize. There was a body of work which was being recognised. Now it is a particular innovation or invention that is being recognised because it is an early career prize. They may not have a body of work yet so it is a recognition for an invention or innovation.

The Infosys prize for Economics is now a separate category. What is the reason behind this?
We recognised that economics requires a separate look just like mathematics or engineering, computer science till now was clubbed with humanities and social sciences. We have left humanities and social sciences as a category and now economics has become a stand-alone category. It is a kind of restructuring of the categories. Plus previously Esther Duflo and Abhijit Banerjee have won in economics and social sciences so we decided there is a need for a separate category.

How do you think these changes will impact Science in general in India?
We already believe that in the 15 years, we have created icons, and encouraged students, and youth to take on careers in science. Our laureates have gone to raise India’s flag in the global arena. So we are continuing on that journey with a tweak, with a change to the prize. The purpose of the prize continues to be the same to make sure that a lot more people take on careers in science and research and do world class research from India on India.

Are you satisfied with the way Science is progressing in the country?
If you ask me if I am satisfied, the plain answer is no because when you are satisfied you may say nothing more to be done. I strongly believe that we have a much larger role to play in science and research not just in India but around the world. Every single day we are finding that there are new tools, techniques, technologies, new scientific discoveries that are happening and we want to make sure that if more people take science as a career they will contribute more. So we do need to work on problems that are specific to India and problems that are specific to developing countries and to the world. In all of these things India can uniquely contribute.

For example, in health care incidents of diabetes, and cancer are increasing in India now. Can we look at prevention, better cure, can we look at affordable cure? This is something that India can uniquely contribute to because we come from a developing country perspective. Similarly in computing itself, we need better computing architecture, processing architecture etc. With the introduction of GPT-4, ChatGPT etc more and more computing power is required but it is also clear that the costs are also going up, the impact on the environment is going up, and the computer centres are consuming a lot more power. So can we look at low-power computing, and different processing architectures, and invent better machine-learning algorithms that do not require so much data? So there are many problems which we can address. Last but not least we are also seeing the effects of climate change. The weather pattern has changed either it is too hot or there is too much rain. All of this requires us to have newer solutions.

Would you like to see any changes at the policy level?
The government has been increasing its funding for science and research. The National Research Foundation has been announced with the Prime Minister as the chairperson, there has been budget allocation for that hopefully after the election it will get solidified. In the interim budget before the election they have announced a ₹1 lakh crore allocation for a 50 year long term debt product which will be available for the private sector for R&D at practically no interest.

So, the Government I believe is starting to spend more money. I would like to see the private sector spend more money on research. I would like to see the private sector work closely with academic institutions and the research community. Already India is a global hub for research but the interaction with academia should grow. Philanthropic investment in research must increase. I am personally supporting philanthropic investment in research. I would like to see more of that. I would also like to see more deep tech start-ups come out of the research that are happening at our academic institutions. Out of the hundred thousand plus start-ups in India only 3,000 are estimated to be deep tech that is a very small percentage. There are many things that still need to be done.

Misperception keeping healthcare providers from prescribing life-saving ORS for child diarrhoea in India: Study

Misperception (42%), ORS stock-out (6%) and financial incentives (5%) were identified as barriers for prescription.

Jahnavi T. R.
BENGALURU

Misperceptions of healthcare providers has been identified as one of the major reasons why Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS), which could be a live-saving treatment in diarrhoea cases, is not being prescribed in India for children who suffer from diarrhoea, according to a study.

Published in February 2024 in *Science Journal*, the study is titled ‘What drives poor quality of care for child diarrhoea? Experimental evidence from India’. The study was conducted across 253 medium sized towns (population between 10,000 and 1.5 lakh) in Karnataka and Bihar to explore the reasons for underprescription of ORS in India.

Among the five authors in the study was Arnab Mukherji, chairperson, Post Graduate Programme in Public Policy and Management at Indian Institute of Management - Bangalore (IIMB). The other researchers were from Pardee RAND Graduate School at Santa Monica, Sanford School of Public Policy, Duke University at Durham, and University of Southern California in U.S.A.

A representational photo of a nurse administering Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS) solution to a child.

“We did our work where there were very few examples of large private hospitals,” said Prof. Mukherji. Most of these providers reported seeing an average of six cases of child diarrhoea every week (about 24 in a month).

More than 2,000 private healthcare providers, including single doctor clinics and nursing homes, were part of the study conducted in 2023. In addition, 25 standardised patients (actors) were trained to present as caretakers of children with diarrhoea. With randomised controlled trials, the researchers tested the effects of three main reasons - misperception of providers, financial incentives and ORS stock - for under prescription of ORS.

Barrier 1 - Misperception
Providers’ misperceptions, which explained 42% of under prescription, stemmed from their confusion about whether patients preferred non-ORS treatments, like antibiotics, the taste of ORS and how it is not perceived as real medicine. While most patients in another household survey conducted by the researchers indicated that they preferred ORS, the providers thought that only 18% of patients preferred the solution.

Hence, when the standardised patients expressed their preference for ORS, the prescription increased by 27 percentage points, the researchers observed.

Barrier 2 - Financial incentives
While prescribing a lucrative treatment option for financial incentives was perceived to be a barrier (5%), the results of the study suggested that eliminating the incentive (by informing the provider that the patient would purchase medicines from a different location), had no effect on prescription of ORS.

For the third barrier, whose role was only 6%, half of the providers were randomly assigned to receive a six-week supply of ORS.

The elimination of stock-outs resulted in a 7 percentage points increase in ORS provision, and 17 percentage points increase among clinics that sell medicine instead of prescribing it.

Recommendation of researchers
When asked about the interventions that the researchers suggest to tackle the problem of under prescription of ORS, Prof. Mukherji said, “Our research emphasises the importance of provider’s perception of the kind of care a patient’s family is seeking as an important factor in determining prescription behaviour of the provider.”

“To support this, sharing the results of our study with all, and encouraging patients to express their preferences at the point of care, may help alleviate any mistaken patient preferences.”

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO MAY 16, 1974

Motion on Conduct of Minister Disallowed

Bangalore, May 15: The acting Chairman of the Legislative Council, Mr. T. N. Narasimhamurthy, to-day refused to give his consent to an adjournment motion moved by a Congress-O member about the alleged misuse of office by the Food Minister, Mr. K. H. Patil, during the recent election to the House from the Dharwar Local Authorities Constituency.

The member, Mr. S. R. Bommai had alleged that in the election held on May 11, the Food Minister had threatened and forced voters to support the ruling party candidate. He further alleged that the Minister, who was being accompanied by the police, threatened to seize the grain stocks with agriculturists.

Two Defiant MLAs Ordered Out of Assembly

Bangalore, May 15: In the Karnataka Assembly today, the Speaker, Mrs. K. S. Nagarathnamma, ordered Mr. Konandur Lingappa (Soc.) and Mr. C. Byre Gowda (CPM) to withdraw from the house for defying the Chair.

The two members, who made a reference to the Karnataka bandh to-day persisted in their attempts to highlight the situation created by the bandh and its impact, despite the Speaker repeatedly asking them not to do so.

When Mr. Lingappa said that the bandh had its impact all over the country, the Speaker pointed out that she had not observed anything. Mr. Lingappa said that he had also sent notice of an adjournment motion and persisted in his reference to the bandh.

Meet the didgeridoo wizard

Do you know what a didgeridoo is or how it sounds? Ahead of his first international tour with stops in France and Portugal, Bengaluru-based Brandon Colaco talks about his attempts to bring in more awareness of this instrument

Anurag Tagat

Although Bengaluru-based Brandon Colaco has been playing the didgeridoo since 2011, he stopped performing around 2019. "I decided to stop performing and start learning music, working with friends and other musicians," he says over a phone call.

It eventually built up to the didgeridoo dance music act Two Eyed Wizard, which had its debut show in 2022 at club venue Fandom at Gilly's Redefined in Koramangala. "We saw almost 350-400 people there, which was a super turn out," Colaco says.

There were a few upheavals, including family losses along the way that led to the artist to "rethink" Two Eyed Wizard. It resulted in presenting the droning, mysterious boom of the didgeridoo in a more "interactive and relatable form" for audiences in bars, festivals, restaurants and other venues.

Now, after playing across India – and more recently, nearly 80 shows in Goa – Two Eyed Wizard is going international. Colaco will be performing solo at the Tribal Elek Festival in Andilly-les-Marais, France on August 10, followed by another set at Fatt Festival between August 29 and September 1 in Odemira, Portugal. While Two Eyed Wizard has no doubt been a regular live performer, Colaco says it was the release of the project's album *Tuwakituwa* in 2023 that helped garner global attention.

Across five songs, Two Eyed Wizard use the didgeridoo to draw in other styles including trance, psychedelic, ambient and Indian classical music. It helps that Colaco also pairs didgeridoo with the *konnakol* (the art of performing percussion syllables vocally in South Indian Carnatic music), which has most likely never been heard before around the world.

He says, "I have my own style of playing the didgeridoo which I've developed over the years, mostly because I craft the instruments. Creating different types of instruments needs you to have the diversity to play all of them and then there is *konnakol* which just came by me. Applying it to the didgeridoo is such a wonderful thing because you get complex rhythmic compositions in a new sound."

Colaco always considered the didgeridoo a "sacred instrument", to the point that he would often feel annoyed, put off or disconnected if members in the audience spoke during his performance or ate or drank during his set. Taught by the late Mukesh Dhiman, a famed didgeridoo maker and teacher in Rishikesh who had DIY workshops since the 1970s that attracted musicians from around the world, Colaco says he also learned to craft the instrument early on. "He used to say just close your eyes, think of God and play."

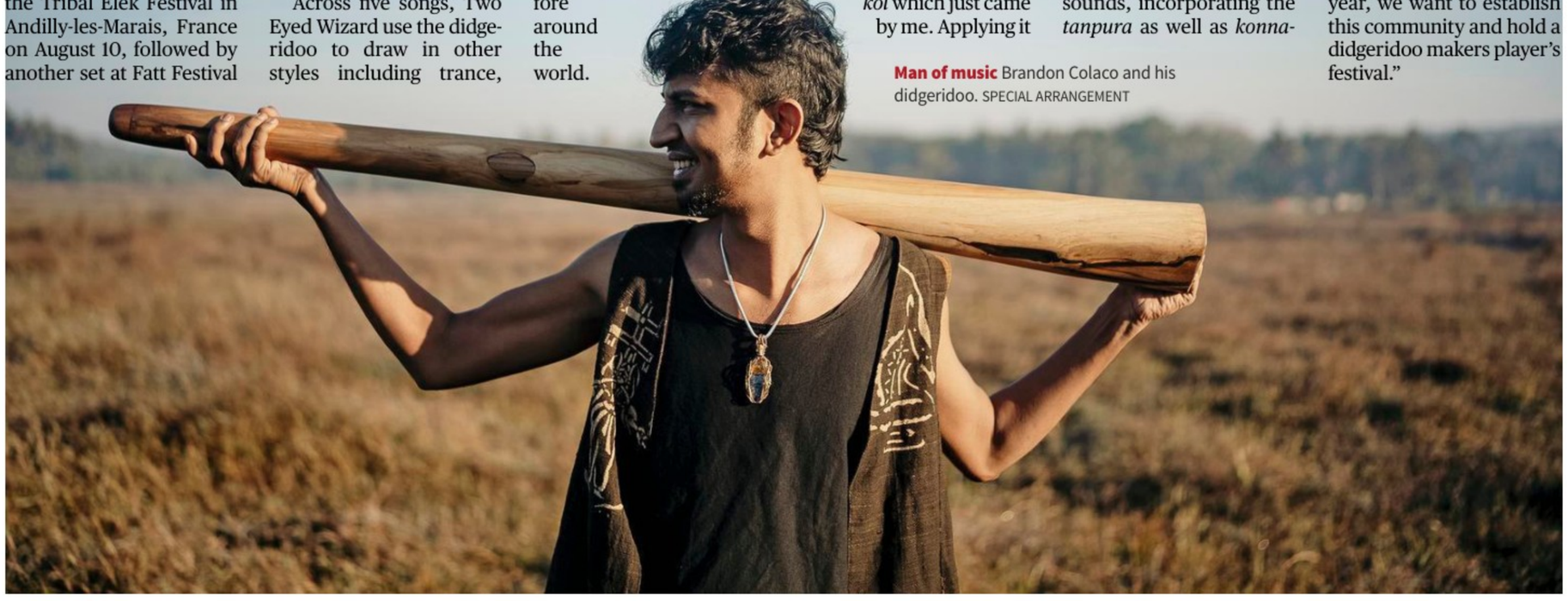
In *Tuwakituwa*, Two Eyed Wizard uses the didgeridoo to draw in other styles including trance, psychedelic, ambient and Indian classical music

Out in Europe, the Two Eyed Wizard set will lean into Indian classical sounds, incorporating the *tanpura* as well as *konnakol*. "I'm thinking of using more Indian influences in my set. I've been practicing to be more interactive with my audience and try to involve them in my *konnakol* to properly bring this didgeridoo India flavour into the mix. My purpose is to put this Indian didgeridoo sound on the map."

There are more shows likely to confirmed in Europe that will keep Colaco busy throughout his 35-day trip. Considering he is also an engineer, a farmer and a visual artist, he is confident that there will be plenty to do.

Once he is back, another single that follows the *Tuwakituwa* collection of songs is slated for release later this year. Another focus remains building a more organised community within India for didgeridoo artists and fans.

"I realised this community is going to support me tomorrow. We have a community set up in Goa which has about 40-50 didgeridoo players. I just did a workshop in Pondicherry, so there is another community there with about 20 players. Bangalore has a very strong community and we'll be holding gatherings next month. This year, we want to establish this community and hold a didgeridoo makers player's festival."



Man of music Brandon Colaco and his didgeridoo. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

CITYBEATS

Books and beer

MAY 16
Crime & Brews is an evening of book swapping and mystery at The Biere Club's Crime Book session. Open to all crime fiction enthusiasts, the event is organised in association with Champaca Bookstore and includes reading, a pint and discussions.
At 5.30pm at The Bierre Club, Vittal Mallya Road. Call 42124383.

Stories through dance

MAY 19
Join dancer Janani Murali for an evening of dance and story telling. In her performance, she will present srories from the world of Tamil literature. The stories for adults and children, are based loosely on the 'Kummi' song written by Subramanya Bharathi.
At Atta Galatta, 4.30pm. Tickets on BookMyShow

Live and rocking

MAY 18
Nikhita Gandhi, a playback singer, who has sung in various languages and is known for songs such as 'Raabta', 'Jagga Jasoos', 'Leo' and 'Varisu', will perform in Bengaluru. The event is presented by Noizz Entertainment and is a ticketed show.
For tickets visit BookMyShow.
At the courtyard, Phoenix Marketcity, Whitefield, 6pm onwards.

Coffee, food and conversations

Prabalika M Borah

When Tim Hortons (TH) opened at Inorbit Mall in Hyderabad – its 30th outlet in the country – it brought in an ambience where coffee lovers could work, conduct meetings, or hang out with friends, as they enjoy freshly brewed coffee, flavourful summer coolers with made-to-order food options such as the savoury cheese melts and piadinas.

Tarun Jain, CEO of Tim Hortons, offered me a hibiscus lemonade cooler (one of their non-coffee top sellers) as we sat down to discuss the brand's business plans in South India, mainly Bengaluru and Hyderabad.

On whether it is a challenge to do business at a time when India is witnessing a coffee revolution and discovering craft coffees and the rich flavours of single origin, Tarun says, "Challenges are a part of business. We focussed on the opportunity. The cafe market in India is booming. Yet, there is a gap for a brand to enter. We are not just bringing coffee, we are getting a cafe experience."

As I took a sip of the hibiscus lemonade cooler enjoying the dominant tartness in the drink rather than its sweetness, Tarun explains that every drink, food on the menu is open to customisation.

The brand's product portfolio ranges from 100% premium arabica coffee to iconic products such as a French vanilla and ice capp, Java iced capp and savoury signatures.

Tarun adds, "Keeping in mind the preferences and food habits of the Indian consumer, we customise our menus for every new market; no menu is a carbon copy of the other. Add to it is the democratic price point that we have. Our Timbits (bite-sized donuts) start at ₹39. We also have rice bowls and salads, wraps and piadinas (something like a quesadilla) apart from the wide range of confectionery."

Tarun says with customisation, favourites vary from city to city but to ensure quality control and uniformity, TH follows a stringent international quality control process right from the sourcing method of ingredients.

Tarun also informs us that TH sources their beans from Chikmanglur.

Tasty tidbits There's more to Tim Hortons than just coffee. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

A bazaar with crafts from across India

Shilpa Anandraj

Madubani paintings, dogra work, pattachitra... If these words excite you then the Bengaluru Dastkar Bazaar 2024, which started in Bengaluru on May 15 should be your destination.

The bazaar, which will go on till May 21, features craft groups from across 25 States.

Of the 160 plus groups, 40 % are coming to Bengaluru for the first time, says Shelly Jain, Head of Programs and Personnel-Dastkar. "Some of the languishing crafts also find representation in this edition."

Though she does not have a craft history or background, Shelly says she found herself associated with crafts for 27 years. "When I joined, I told myself I will work for a year and leave. There was something that kept me hooked. I continued ahead and never looked back. I found satisfaction, which kept me motivated. That is how my journey with the craft world started."

The bazaar includes handcrafted textiles, jewellery, home and décor, furnishings, accessories and wellness products.

From the West comes *phad* and miniature painting, handloom weaving, *dabu, bagru* and Sanganeri block printing, lacquer work, meenakari, *lehriya* and *bandhani*, and handcrafted musical Instruments. From the north there are crafts like *bhil, gond* and *thangka* painting, Banarasi, Chanderi, *patola, paithani* and *jhamdani*.

There is also leather puppet painting, ikkat, Channapattana toys and crochet from the south. The Eastern sector brings *Madhubani* and *pattachitra* painting, batik, *kantha* embroidery, *dhokra* and fusion art.

Bengaluru, Shelly says, is a good place for the bazaar. "People here appreciate and value crafts. They are patient in every way, including waiting in line to pay for their purchases. It is a pleasure to be here every time. We also have dance and music at the bazaar. This year we have brought the rouf dance from Kashmir."

Riot of colour Some of the crafts at the bazaar, Shelly Jain. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"There will be craft demonstrations and workshops. We also have some award-winning crafts people like Mohammad Dilshad (*chanderi*), Narsingh Das (*meenakari*), Chaman Siju (*khadi*) and AK Textiles (*sanganer* block printing)."

Dastkar was established in 1981. "Our core focus is on uplifting the traditional Indian craftspeople, particularly women, and those based in rural areas. Dastkar achieves its mission through collaborative efforts with governmental, non-governmental, and foreign agencies, serving as an advisor, assessor, and source of support for craft groups," says Shelly.

The Bazaar is also pet friendly, says Shelly.

The Bazaar is on at Jayamahal Palace Hotel, till May 21. It is open from 11am to 7pm. Entry is free to all.

Censor board should not have political appointees: Bharathiraja

Aroon Deep
NEW DELHI

Tamil filmmaker P. Bharathiraja asked the Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in a letter written in February that the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) should not appoint politically affiliated people to its advisory panels. Mr. Bharathiraja was writing to the Ministry in his capacity as the president of the Tamil Film Active Producers Association (TFAPA).

In the letter, obtained by *The Hindu*, Mr. Bharathiraja said, "We recommend that to maintain neutrality and objectivity of the board, a member of the advisory panel should not be affiliated to any political party, as it is bringing in a bias during the certification process otherwise.

The letter opposed proposal for an expedited film certification programme of three working days.

A.P. records 81.86% voter turnout, highest so far in this election: CEO

This includes 1.2% votes polled though postal ballots, essential service and home votes, says Mukesh Kumar Meena; Ongole Lok Sabha constituency records highest polling percentage while Visakhapatnam LS constituency registers the lowest

Sambasiva Rao M.
GUNTUR

With a cumulative polling percentage of 81.86, Andhra Pradesh has emerged as the State with the highest voter turnout in the first four phases of the seven-phase Lok Sabha election. People of the State had on May 13 exercised their franchise in the election conducted to 25 Lok Sabha and 175 Assembly constituencies, and the Election Commission of India (EC) declared the cumulative figures on Wednesday.

Addressing the media here, State Chief Electoral Officer Mukesh Kumar Meena said that the cumulative polling percentage included 80.66 through EVMs and 1.2 through postal ballots, essential service and home votes.

There was an increase of about 1% in the votes polled though EVMs in 2024 when compared with the election conducted in 2019, the CEO said. While 79.77% polling was registered in 2019, the figure was 78.41% in 2014.

Ongole Lok Sabha constituency recorded the highest polling percentage of 87.06, while Visakhapatnam Lok Sabha constituency registered the lowest at 71.11%, Mr. Meena said.

Though the polling percentage in Visakhapatnam Lok Sabha constituency was less with compared with the remaining 24 constituencies, the voter turnout was more than 4% when compared with the elections conducted 2019 when it registered a polling percentage of 67, he added. When it comes to Assembly constituencies in the State, Darsi, with a polling percentage of 90.91, topped the chart, while Tirupati recorded the lowest – 63.32%, Mr. Meena said.

Out of the total voters of 4,13,33,702 in the State, who included 2,02,74,144 male, 2,10,56,137 female and 3,421 third gender, as many as 3,33,40,560 voters had cast their vote in the EVMs. They included 1,64,30,359 male, 1,69,08,684 female and 1,517 third gender, the CEO said.

"Due to various reasons, there is a mismatch of 227 votes between those polled in the Assembly and Lok Sabha constituencies. The Lok Sabha constituencies recorded 227 more votes," he said.

Poll details: A.P. Chief Electoral Officer Mukesh Kumar Meena addressing the media on Wednesday. T. VIJAYA KUMAR

Telangana registers 66.3% voter turnout

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

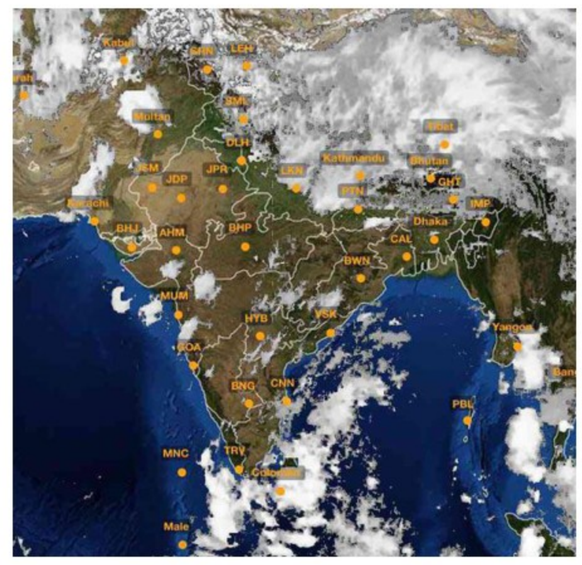
Telangana registers 66.3% voter turnout with Bhongir reporting highest at 76.78% and Hyderabad lowest at 48.48%.

The overall poll percentage was more than 3% higher than the 2019 Lok Sabha election.

The voting percentage left the three major contenders – the Congress, the BRS and the BJP – baffled and the party leaderships are now assessing the pros and cons of the voting pattern.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Thursday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Arunachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Mahe and Karnataka. Thunderstorm with lightning/gusty winds likely at isolated places over Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura, Sikkim, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Yanam and Puducherry

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	37.6	27.2	Kozhikode	5	35.6	26.4
Ahmedabad	—	39.6	26.4	Kurnool	4	40.2	26.1
Aizawl	—	35.1	22.9	Lucknow	—	41.2	26.3
Allahabad	—	41.4	28.2	Madurai	—	37.1	25.6
Bengaluru	—	31.8	23.2	Mangaluru	—	33.4	25.0
Bhopal	2	38.5	22.8	Mumbai	—	37.2	26.8
Bhubaneswar	—	37.2	26.1	Mysuru	—	—	—
Chandigarh	—	42.0	23.4	New Delhi	—	41.2	22.9
Chennai	—	36.0	28.2	Patna	—	40.3	29.2
Coimbatore	—	35.7	23.3	Port Blair	—	33.2	26.6
Dehradun	—	38.8	20.9	Puducherry	—	35.4	28.0
Gangtok	8	24.4	15.7	Pune	3	39.6	24.0
Goa	5	34.7	25.1	Raipur	—	39.8	27.1
Guwahati	—	37.2	24.8	Ranchi	—	37.4	23.9
Hubballi	—	35.0	24.0	Shillong	6	24.7	15.6
Hyderabad	—	36.8	24.4	Shimla	—	30.7	18.2
Imphal	—	33.2	21.1	Srinagar	—	28.7	10.5
Jaipur	—	42.4	26.4	Thiruvananthapuram	0.4	33.5	26.7
Kochi	—	33.6	25.6	Tiruchi	—	36.7	27.0
Kohima	—	25.4	16.4	Vijayawada	2.6	37.5	26.2
Kolkata	0.9	36.8	27.6	Visakhapatnam	—	35.0	28.4

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO₂	NO₂	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.26	.32	.20	206	141	
Bengaluru	9	—	.12	56	115	
Chennai	.11	.15	119	19	19	
Delhi	.33	168	.54	323	348	
Hyderabad	3	.30	.49	46	97	
Kolkata	7	.24	.22	46	56	
Lucknow	5	.63	.27	280	161	
Mumbai	.35	110	.77	76	119	
Pune	.16	112	.56	182	125	
Visakhapatnam	.10	.14	.16	41	60	

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 340 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu recorded a healthy AQI score of 26

SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Carnatic music fest from today

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Bangalore Gayana Samaja will present a Carnatic classical instrumental music festival titled "Vaadya Vybhava" from May 16 to 19. It will be held on the Bangalore Gayana Samaja premises on Sri Krishnarajendra Road, (K.R. Road).

The programme will be held between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. daily, between May 16 and 18. On May 19, Vidwan T.V. Gopalakrishnan, the mridangam maestro, will be honoured with the Lifetime Achievement award and will be conferred with the title Naadasri at 6 p.m., followed by a percussion ensemble led by him.

Bharat Bank
Bharat Co-op. Bank (Mumbai) Ltd
Multi-State Scheduled Bank

No.100, Money Terrace, K H Road, Bengaluru-560 027, Tel No. 080-22127203 / 22121066 / 22291942

AUCTION NOTICE - AUCTION SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY
Under SARFAESI Act, 2002 read with Provision to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

WHEREAS
Sealed Offers/Tenders are invited from the public/intending bidders for purchase of below said immovable mortgaged properties on **"As is where is basis and as is what is basis"** which is now in the physical possession of the Authorised Officer of **Bharat Co-operative Bank (Mumbai) Ltd.**, as per section 13 (4) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.

Name and address of the Secured Creditor : **Bharat Co-operative Bank (Mumbai) Ltd.**
Registered Office : Mohan Terrace, 1st Floor, 64/72, Mody Street, Fort, Mumbai - 400 001
Central Office : Marutagiri, Plot No. 13/9A, Sonawala Road, Goregaon (East), Mumbai - 400063. (Tel : 6189 0088 / 6189 0134).
Branch at : Vishwas Tower, Ground Floor,Court Back Road, Udupi-576101.

Sl. No.	NAME & ADDRESS OF THE MORTGAGOR / BORROWERS / SURETIES	OUTSTANDING LOAN AMOUNT	(a) PROPERTY DESCRIPTION & (b) ENCUMBRANCES KNOWN TO THE BANK & (c) PENDING COURT CASES	i. Reserve Price, ii. EMD iii. Last Date & Time for Submitting of Bid / Offers iv. Date & Time & Place of Opening Tender
1.	**Principal Borrower Mr.Prem Prasad Shetty, S/o.Mr.Jayaram Shetty** Prarthanashree, Krodashrama, Thenkanidiyoor, Udupi 576 106 **Having Business Addresses at:** C/o.M/s.Unnathi Career Academy Ashachandra Trade, "Kinfratech Spaces", 2nd Floor, PPC 1st Cross Road, Udupi-576101.	i. **Rs.41,92,837/-** as on 04.05.2024 under Term Loan Account No. 003233510065831 together with further interest @ contractual rate and costs, charges and expenses and less amounts repaid thereafter if any. ii. **Rs.36,93,078.39** as on 08.05.2024 under Asset Backed Loan Account No. 003233540000039 together with further interest @ contractual rate and costs, charges and expenses and less amounts repaid thereafter if any.	(i) Office/Unit No.4706, as per the development scheme, sanctioned by the Corporation of the City Bangalore, vide L.P.E./N.E./914/75-76 dated 11.07.1975 periodically revalidated being the Office Space bearing No.4706, admeasuring 537 sq.ft. built up area on the 7th Floor, BBMP PID No.77-111-45/2-86 in the multistoried Building known as **"High Point IV",** constructed on converted land bearing property No.45 & 45/2,Palace Road (Millers Road Index), Bengaluru earlier known as 'Ring Wood' or 'Laleshar' and now known as **'High Point',** land admeasuring 49.27 meters on the East, 102.193+70.36 meters on the North, 80.41 meters on the West and 114.22 meters on the South, within the Registration Sub District of Gandhinagar, Near Chalukya Hotel, Palace Road, Bengaluru -560 001 alongwith undivided right over said land to the extent of 5.40/2300 shares i.e.258 sq.ft on land or 24 sq.mtrs, and one and half part of depth of ceiling, floors and walls common to the other flats, including the whole of the eternal walls and walls, abutting common areas, common entrance foyer, common corriders in all floors, staircase etc and the building and bounded by : **East :** Palace Road, **West :** Property bearing portion of Plashewydd, **North:** Properties known as Hazelmere and Hotel Chalukya, **South :** Property known as Sandringhm. **b) NIL, and c) WP No.19270/2023 before High Court of Karnataka** **AND** (ii) **Site No.16, House List No.34** of converted **Survey No.142** vide its conversion order No.ALN.SR.134/2008-09 dated 18.02.2009 issued by Deputy Commissioner, Chikka Ballapur District in the layout known as "The Calfornia Country" situated at **Amanipurna Sagarekere (Ramaganaparthi New Extension, 2nd Block, Doddapailagurki Village Panchayat), Kasaba Hobli, Taluk & District Chikkaballapur,** measuring East to West :15.24 meters and North to South :24.38 meters in all total measuring 371.55 sq.meters (3397.80sq.ft) and bounded by : **East :** Site No.B/17, **West :** Site No.B/15, **North :** Site No.B/7, **South :** 12 Mtr.Road/Layout Road. **(b) NIL, & (c)WP No.19270/2023 before High Court of Karnataka**	(i) **Rs. 90,00,000/-** (ii) **Rs. 9,00,000/-** (iii) **05.06.2024 at 05.00 PM at No.100, Money Terrace, K H Road, Bengaluru-560 027** (iv) **06.06.2024 at 11.30 AM at No.100, Money Terrace, K H Road, Bengaluru-560 027** (i) **Rs. 28,80,000/-** (ii) **Rs. 2,88,000/-** (iii) **05.06.2024 at 05.00 PM at No.100, Money Terrace, K H Road, Bengaluru-560 027** (iv) **06.06.2024 at 12.00 PM at No.100, Money Terrace, K H Road, Bengaluru-560 027**
2.	**Principal Borrower: 1. M/s.Unnathi Career Academy Regd office:** No.483, 4th Floor, Sathya Lakshmi Square,CMH Road, Indiranagar, Bengaluru-560 038 **Business Address:** Ashachandra Trade Centre, Kinfratech Spaces, 2nd Floor, PPC, 1st Cross Road, Udupi 576 101. **Partners & Joint/Co-Borrower : 2. Mr.Prem Prasad Shetty, S/o.Mr.Jayaram Shetty 3. Mrs.Poornima Ganesh Shetty, W/o.Mr.Prem Prasad Shetty** Both are Residing at: Prarthanashree, Krodashrama, Thenkanidiyoor, Udupi 576 106	i. **Rs.55,02,519.74** as on 30.04.2024 under Cash Credit No. 003213100000374 together with further interest @ contractual rate and costs, charges and expenses and less amounts repaid thereafter if any. ii. **Rs.26,72,781.51** as on 08.05.2024 under Term Loan Account No. 003233510066618 together with further interest @ contractual rate and costs, charges and expenses and less amounts repaid thereafter if any.		

Terms & Conditions: **1.** Auction is being held on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS AND AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" and the Bank is not responsible for encumbrances on title if any, condition or any other fact affecting the property, unknown to the Bank. The property is being sold under "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" with all the existing and future encumbrances / Society Dues / Builders dues / Property Tax / Utility Service provider outstanding dues etc. and same shall be borne by bidders whether known or unknown to the Bank. The Authorised Officer / Secured Creditor shall not be held responsible in any way for any third-party claims / rights / dues received after date of opening the bid. The purchaser should conduct due diligence on all aspects related to the property to his / her satisfaction. The purchaser shall not be entitled to make any claim against the Authorized Officer / Secured Creditor in this regard at a later date. **2.** Charges for documentations, transfer fees with Revenue Department, Conveyance, Stamp Duty, statutory dues (lawfull house tax, Electricity charges& other dues), Registration Charges with the Registrar of Assurances as applicable and other statutory dues if any as applicable under law, shall be borne by the purchaser and the purchaser should complete all the transfer formalities. **3.** The Authorised Officer of the Bank reserves the right to CANCEL/ACCEPT/REJECT/ALTER/MODIFY/ POSTPONE the Tender Sale /Auction without giving any reason whatsoever or prior notice. **4.** The intending bidders may take inspection of the property **on 22.05.2024 between 11.00AM to 05.00PM** for **Sr.No.(i)** property, and On **23.05.2024 between 11.00AM to 05.00PM** for **Sr.No.(ii)** property or any other date & time fixed with prior appointment of the Authorised Officer. **5.** The intending bidders may obtain the prescribed Tender forms from Bharat Co-Operative Bank (Mumbai) Ltd, office at (i) No.100, Money Terrace, K H Road, Bengaluru -560 027 or (ii) Classique arcade, K.S Roa Road,Hampankatta, Mangaluru-575001 and the intending bidders should submit their bids/offers in the prescribed forms along with the KYC documents (PAN Card & Address Proof) together with the Pay Order/Demand Draft of EMD amount in favour of "Bharat Co Operative Bank (Mumbai) Ltd" in a sealed envelope addressed to the Authorised Officer, Bharat Co Operative Bank (Mumbai)Ltd at the above said address on or before 05.06.2024 at 05.00PM. (Envelope containing the Bids/offer should superscribed as for **Sr.No.(i) property as "Bid for Unit No.4706, "High Point IV",Palace Road, Bengaluru and in respect of Sr.No.(ii) property as "Bid for Site No.16, "The Calfornia Country", Chikkaballapur"**, **6**. Bidders present during the opening of the Tenders may participate in the Oral Bidding / Inter-se Bidding. The Authorised Officer of the Bank have discretion in the manner of conduct of sale including decision with regard to inter-se bidding / negotiations amongst the bidders to realize highest sale value for the said property/ies. They are, therefore advised to remain present themselves or through their duly authorized representative(s), who can take the decision for them. **7.** Mortgagor/borrower/Joint-Co Borrower /Surety may bring prospective bidders/offers to realize good value and may also remain present while opening the offers **on 06.06.2024** aforesaid time and place. **8. The** successful bidders/offerers should deposit 25% of the bid amount (Including EMD) immediately on the day of auction or not later than next working day, as case may be, of opening of bids and balance 75% of the bid amount within 15 days from the date of opening the tenders/ and the same maybe extended for further period as per the provisions of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002. **9.** If the successful bidders fail to pay the amount as aforesaid the deposited amount shall be stand forfeited. **10.** In case of non-acceptance of offer of purchase by the Secured Creditor/Authorised Officer, the EMD amount of 10% paid along with the application will be refunded without any interest to the unsuccessful bidders. **11.** The Principal Borrower / Guarantor / Mortgagor is hereby informed in their own interest to take away all the movables, personal belongings, office documents / equipments / papers, articles, etc. which are not hypothecated to the Bank, if any lying in the above said premises with prior intimation in writing to the Authorised Officer, failing which the same shall be removed / disposed-off as scrap without any realizable value without giving any further notice to you Borrower / Guarantor /Mortgagor to enable us to handover the vacant and peaceful possession to the successful bidders on receipt of entire sale amount, which please take note.

STATUTORY NOTICE UNDER RULE 8[6] OF THE SARFAESI ACT

This is also a notice to the Borrowers / Guarantor / Mortgagor of the above loan under Rule 8[6] of the SARFAESI Act, 2002 about holding of sale by inviting sealed tenders from the public in general for the sale of the secured assets on above mentioned date if his / their dues are not cleared in full.

Notice is hereby given to you to pay the sum as mentioned above before the date fixed for sale failing which the property will be sold and balance dues, if any will be recovered with interest and costs from the Borrowers / Guarantor / Mortgagor.

Place : Bengaluru
Date : 16.05.2024

Sd/- **Chief Manager and Authorised Officer, Bharat Co-operative Bank (Mumbai) Ltd.**

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client has negotiated to purchase the Property, which is more fully described in the Schedule below from its Owner **Mr.NITHIN REDDY,** son of Mr.Venkata Subba Reddy, No.406, 15th Cross, 6th Sector, HSR Layout, BENGALURU-560 102. Any persons having any right, title, interest, lien, charge or claim whatsoever in, upon or to the Schedule Property or to any portion thereof, by way of any easement or under agreements, arrangements, lease, trust, inheritance, gift, partition, bequest, possession, mortgage, exchange or under any deed/instrument easement or however otherwise, may submit his/her/its/their objection/s claim/s, in writing to me at the under mentioned address, through Registered Post, along with the supporting documentary evidence, within **FIFTEEN days** of the issuance of this notice, failing which, my client will proceed on the basis that there are no claims over the Schedule Property.

SCHEDULE

All that Residential Vacant Site No.366, allotted by the Bangalore Development Authority, situated at 5th Block, 6th Stage, Banashankari, Ward Bengaluru, measuring East to West:12.00 Meters and North to South:18.00 Meters, in all measuring 216.00 Square Meters and bounded as follows:- ON THE **EAST:** BDA Site No.365; **WEST:** BDA Site No.367; **NORTH:** Road; **SOUTH:** BDA Site Nos.378 and 377.

K.S.MADANA COPAL, Advocate, No.1, Ground Floor, ROYAL PARK, No.34, Park Road, BENGALURU-560 051. Ph.No. 41130082, 22864065
Place: Bengaluru. Date: 16-05-2024

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public are hereby informed that my clients **MRS.SHWETHA.N.R**, Aged about 39 years, W/o. Mr. Arvind.M, Residing at No. 166/A, 3rd Cross, Behind Swamy Vivekananda Metro Station, New Byappanahalli Extension, Indiranagar, Bangalore - 560038. has enter in to a sale agreement with its owner **MR. THARESH.M,** Aged about 37 Years, S/o. Mr.Muniraju.K.M, Residing at No.171/2, 9th Cross, St. Anthony School Road, Ramamurthynagar, Bangalore - 560 016. in respect of the schedule property which is more fully described in the schedule given below. If any persons claiming or objections or rights with regard to the Schedule Property they are required to send the same with documentary evidence within **Fifteen (15) days** from the date of this Public Notice hereof my clients shall be at liberty to proceed with the sale deed if there is no any claims or objection in the regard to the Schedule Property within the stipulated time.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of **Site No.5,** Khatha No.60/2A, Property No.60/2A, Old Property No.60, Situated at **Kowdenahalli Village, Krishnarajapura Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk, erstwhile Bangalore South Taluk,** Now Coming under the Jurisdiction of Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike Bangalore, Measuring East to West: **30** Feet and North to South: **40** Feet, in all measuring **1200 Square Feet,** together with all appurtenances whatsoever whether underneath or above the surface and bounded by:-
East by : Site No.8,
West by : Site No.2,
North by : 20 Feet Road,
South by : 20 Feet Road,

T. RAMESH KUMAR
MANJULA RAMESH, Advocates
No.1, Alisa Arcade, Near Vijaya Bank, Old Madras Road, K.R. Puram, Bengaluru-560036. Phone : 9845601026
Place : Bengaluru Date : 15-05-2024

Ministry of Culture Government of India
VISVESVARAYA INDUSTRIAL & TECHNOLOGICAL MUSEUM
(National Council of Science Museums)
Kasturba Road, Bengaluru - 560 001.
Telephone-080-22866200, Fx: 080 2286 4009/22864119
E-mail: vitmuseum@gmail.com, Website: http://www.vismuseum.gov.in

ADVERTISEMENT No. 01/2024 CANCELLATION NOTICE

The recruitment for the posts of Exhibition Assistant 'A' and Technician 'A' (Carpenter/Electrical/Electronics/Fitter) at VITM, Bengaluru against Advertisement Nos. 11/2022 and 03/2023 of this museum stands cancelled due to administrative reasons.

ARMY PUBLIC SCHOOL
K KAMARAJ ROAD, BANGALORE-42
Tele No : 080-25581238, www.apsbangalore.edu.in

LAST DATE OF SUBMISSION – 21 MAY 2024 (1000HRS)

TENDERS ARE INVITED FOR THE WORK/SUPPLY/ INSTALLATION AT ARMY PUBLIC SCHOOL, K KAMARAJ ROAD, BANGALORE-42

Tender No	Description of Work
APS/169/2024-25	Window Blinds - PVC 70% Polyester 100%, Thickness 0.4mm, Light Transmission 5 to 8% Blackout (Size s 7' x 7' 169 Blinds and 3' x 10.5' 23 Blinds) (Approx 9981 Sqft)
APS/170/2024-25	Installation of IP Based CCTV Cameras – 30 Nos
APS/171/2024-25	New Construction of Parapet Wall of Size 380 Feet length x 5 feet Height (1.5 feet plinth beneath the ground level with solid stones) and 3.5 feet above the ground level with solid 6inch Blocks and plastering both the sides (Approx area 380 feet x 5 feet =1900 Sqft)

For details & Specifications visit school website **www.apsbangalore.edu.in** Separate quotations are invited for the above mentioned works/ supply of items. Submit sealed quotation super scribed on the envelope **"TENDER FOR_____"** to reach at ARMY PUBLIC SCHOOL, KAMARAJ ROAD, BANGALORE on or before **21 MAY 2024** by **1000hrs. (Vendors are advised to visit the site before submission of quotation)**

Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Private Limited
5th Floor, Plot No. 137, Sector- 44 I Gurgaon- 122002 Ph: 0124 - 4527200

Appendix IV (See Rule 8 (1)
POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property)

Whereas,

The Authorised Officer of The Vishweshwar Sahakari Bank Ltd, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 ('SARFAESI Act'), and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) of the SARFAESI Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 ('Rules'), issued a Demand Notice (Ref No.01/REC/AO/L-13126/2012-13) dated 06.02.2013 calling upon the borrower and guarantor **1) Mr. Bharat Bashetti Kurbetti (Borrower) and Mr.Suresh Rajaram Wagale (Guarantor)** to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being **Rs.23,93,470.00 (Rupees Twenty Three Lakhs Ninety Three Thousand Four Hundred and Seventy only) as on 31.01.2013** together with future interest and costs from **01-02-2013** till date of repayment within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

And whereas, the Financial Assets with respect to the loan(s) availed by said borrower and guarantor from The Vishweshwar Sahakari Bank Ltd. have since been acquired by Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Pvt. Ltd. under Section 5 of the SARFAESI Act vide Assignment Agreement dated **20.02.2019** thereby acquiring all rights, titles and interest of The Vishweshwar Sahakari Bank Ltd. therein including underlying securities.

The borrower/guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given by the Authorised Officer of Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Pvt. Ltd. to the borrower/guarantor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on me under Section 13(4) of the SARFAESI Act read with Rule 8 of the Rules on this **11th day of May 2024.**

The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Pvt. Ltd. for an amount of **Rs.1,28,49,749/- (Rupees One Crore Twenty Eight Lakh Forty Nine Thousand Seven Hundred Forty Nine Only)** as on **17.11.2023** together with future interest and costs from **18.11.2023**

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the SARFAESI Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

Description of the Immovable Property

½ share of House Property at C.T.S No 2529, Nipani Tal Chikodi, Dist Belgaum area admeasuring 163.04 Sq.mt Boundaries :North : Road South : House No 2509A East : House No 2530 West : House No 2528

Place: Nipani
Date:11.05.2024
(Authorized Officer)
Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Pvt. Ltd.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified that, my clients have agreed to purchase the Schedule property, from its Owner **SRI.BHARATH KUMAR alias BHARATH D JAIN** S/o Late. Dungarmal, residing at No.4/5, Gopalakrishna Swamy Temple, Chickpet, Bengaluru-560053. The Owner has represented that, he is the sole and absolute owner of the Schedule property and apart from him no one else has any manner of right or interest in or over the Schedule property.

Apart from the said Owners, if any other person/s have any manner of right, title and or interest or claim or charge or lien over the Schedule property or otherwise have any lawful objection/s for sale of the Schedule Property by the aforesaid Owner, they are hereby called upon to file their objection/s in writing, along with the photocopies of documents on which they rely, with the undersigned, **within 7 days** from the date of publication of this notice. Objection/s received thereafter will not be binding on my clients.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of the agricultural lands bearing **Sy.No.42/9 (Old Sy.No.42/1)** measuring 24 Guntas and **Sy.No.42/12 (Old Sy.No.42/1)** measuring 8 Guntas, in all measuring 32 Guntas, situated at Thalaguppe Village, Bidadi Hobli, Ramanagara Taluk and District and bounded on:

East by : Mopuraiah's land
West by : Road & Gogappa's land
North by : Puttamma's land
South by : Chikkamuniyappa's land & Byrappa's land

Sd/- **S.F. GOUTAM CHAND**
Advocate
GOUTAM ASSOCIATES
No.60, 2nd Floor, Kanakapura Road, Basavanagudi, Bangalore-560 004.

Crime and time

Election-time incarceration adversely affects democratic spirit

Any inconsistency in judicial decisions is bound to be seen as unequal application of rules. On the principle of parity, former Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren, who leads the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, is arguably entitled to interim bail to enable him to campaign in his home State for the next phases of the general election, from May 20. Mr. Soren was arrested on January 31. It was only last week that the Supreme Court of India underscored the importance of the general election to grant bail to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal up to the end of the polls. Although the opinion was based on "the peculiarities of the person in question and the surrounding circumstances", a principle did emerge from that ruling that key leaders could be allowed to campaign in the interest of electoral democracy. However, the Court chose the position that it first needs to hear the other side, the Enforcement Directorate in this case. Even though it favoured a hearing in the week beginning May 20, it agreed to an earlier date, May 17. It is indeed a legal requirement that any order of bail can be given only after hearing the prosecution's objections. In Mr. Kejriwal's case, the Court heard and rejected the argument that freeing a political leader solely for the purpose of canvassing votes during an election will amount to privileging the political class above other categories of people arrested for similar offences.

The Jharkhand High Court did not deliver judgment on the petition challenging Mr. Soren's arrest for two months, resulting in a delay in his approaching the Supreme Court. Ultimately, it passed an order dismissing his plea on May 3, having reserved its verdict on February 28. It is true that no two cases are comparable. While the Delhi Chief Minister is facing the charge of bribery in exchange for adopting an excise policy favourable to some manufacturers, Mr. Soren is accused of laundering the proceeds of crime in the illegal sale of a parcel of land to acquire property in Ranchi. With the prosecution depending mainly on approvers' statements against Mr. Kejriwal, and the agency banking on documentary evidence against Mr. Soren, there may be differences in the respective merits of their cases. The stringent provisions for bail in the Prevention of Money Laundering Act have the unfortunate effect of making courts consider the overall merits of a case at the bail stage itself. It is unfortunate that the relatively simple act of releasing the accused against bail bonds, with attendant conditions to safeguard evidence and prevent them from fleeing justice, has become politically sensitive. Election-time incarceration, which renders the playing field disadvantageous to the affected parties, adversely affects the democratic spirit.

New term, old issues

Putin is finding it difficult to keep the effects of war from hitting home

One of the key decisions Vladimir Putin took after being sworn in as Russia's President for the fifth time was to remove his long-time Minister of Defence, Sergei Shoigu. That Andrei Belousov, a civilian economist, has been brought in to run the Defence Ministry shows how much the war in Ukraine has become an economic battle for Russia as it struggles to stabilise its war-time economy and keep its energy ties and defence production going despite biting western sanctions. There have been criticisms about the way Mr. Shoigu planned and executed the war, which Russia, according to western intelligence, expected to be a quick affair. But Mr. Shoigu, who successfully executed the annexation of Crimea in 2014 and Russia's military intervention in Syria starting 2015, has deep ties with both the Kremlin and Russia's defence industrial complex. Even when Russia faced setbacks initially and a rare rebellion led by the late Wagner chief Yevgeny Prigozhin challenged the defence leadership, Mr. Putin threw his weight behind Mr. Shoigu. But now, as Mr. Putin begins a new term with a promise to Russia of victory in Ukraine he has decided to shake up the Defence Ministry and bring in a technocrat whose quick and primary responsibility would be to meet military objectives quickly.

The change comes at a time when Russia has gained battlefield momentum. Last week, it launched a new offensive in the northeast, in an apparent bid to attack Kharkiv, Ukraine's second largest city. Ukraine is expecting new weapons from the U.S., but it is not clear whether that would be enough for its war-fatigued army to withstand the Russian onslaught. Mr. Putin's immediate goal is to win the war, but he does not have a clear path to victory either. The war has caused lasting damage to Russia's ties with the West, especially with Europe with which Mr. Putin had sought to build strong economic and energy ties, and driven Russia deeper into China's hands. At home, he has tightened his grip on the state and society and is intolerant of dissent. For now, the state has managed to prevent the effects of sanctions reaching ordinary citizens, but it remains to be seen how long the Kremlin can do so if the war continues endlessly. Ukraine has also taken the war to Russia, by attacking its Black Sea fleet and border towns, raising the costs of the war. Mr. Putin seems to be thinking that the momentum is on his side, irrespective of the challenges. But even if his troops make further gains in Ukraine, he would be ruling over a Russia that is internally more repressive, economically weaker and isolated in the West and in a war of attrition with a permanently hostile neighbour.

The pitch for subaltern secularism

Varghese K. George

In the shifting sands of politics, Mani Shankar Aiyar and Lalu Prasad Yadav are two politicians who have remained steadfast on one question of principle – Hindu-Muslim harmony. Both are outstanding orators with a sense of humour, but the commonality ends there. Their lives and histories are far wide apart otherwise. Mr. Aiyar thinks and speaks in English; Mr. Yadav does so in Hindi, in fact, in Bhojpuri. Mr. Aiyar is 83, and Mr. Yadav is 75, but their paths have never crossed, though they were Ministers in the same Union Cabinet under the United Progressive Alliance (UPA). Their parallel lives make a metaphor of the crisis of Indian secularism.

The trajectory across the years

Mr. Aiyar went to Doon School, St. Stephen's College and joined the Indian Foreign Service. Mr. Yadav went to a village school and then college in Bihar. Mr. Aiyar describes himself as a 'secular fundamentalist,' the title of one of his numerous books. Mr. Yadav has not written any book (though he has lent his name to a biography of himself titled, *Gopalganj To Raisina*. He has, however, scripted a social coalition of Bihar's subalterns and Muslim minorities, by stopping the *rath yatra* of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) veteran L.K. Advani and ordering his arrest in Bihar in 1990.

The India International Centre in New Delhi is considered a nerve centre of English intellectualism. In 2006, Mr. Yadav, then Union Minister of Railways and leader of the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) – the second largest contingent in the ruling UPA coalition and in power in Bihar – applied for membership of the IIC. The screening committee of the IIC, in its wisdom, decided that Mr. Yadav was not fit to be its member. "I should not have applied," Mr. Yadav said later. "It is not my place." The IIC never explained its decision. The scholar and politician, Karan Singh, who had sponsored Mr. Yadav's application, resigned as the IIC's life trustee in protest.

Mr. Aiyar, of course is a member of the IIC, which is the gated community of India's English speaking secular elite. He wears his command over the English language on his sleeve. In contrast, Mr. Yadav's humour is often social criticism. And when he turns that on his opponents, they too laugh, as when Atal Bihari Vajpayee was in splits listening to Mr. Yadav taking him down during the debate on a trust vote motion in the Lok Sabha in April 1999. Mr. Yadav cites village life, Kabir, Rahim, Buddha, Krishna in his speeches.

Mr. Aiyar would cite Orwell, Kipling and Shakespeare and his humour is often at the cost of his opponents. In his running battle with a Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh-leaning editor in Delhi, he would repeatedly recall that he went to Deshbandhu College, a far cry from the Stephanian world. Ever ready with one-liners, whether to take down an opponent or eulogise a friend, he used to be a joy when it came to sound bites. And in 2014, he gave the winning slogan, not for his party the Congress, but the target of his ire, Narendra Modi. "Let him sell tea," he quipped in response to a question, on a former tea seller's claim to the top post in the country.

Mr. Narendra Modi is opposed in the subaltern terrain by Mr. Yadav. Around the same time that Mr. Modi (born 1950) was selling tea in Gujarat, Mr. Yadav (born 1948) was herding cattle in Bihar. Much before Mr. Modi's *chaiwallah* story became an international bestseller, Mr. Yadav had sold his. In the same speech cited above, Mr. Yadav said about his wife Rabri Devi, "It is the beauty of Indian secularism that a poor woman from the village is the Chief Minister of Bihar," charging the BJP with trying to destroy it.

Mr. Aiyar spoke within the gated community. Mr. Yadav spoke to those without gates and homes. Their secularism ran on parallel tracks, not agnostic of each other, but fostering a mutual hostility. The English elite could never accept Mr. Yadav and his like; though a Union Minister, the IIC would not admit him. Mr. Yadav had his own views. In the speech in 1999, he reminded Yashwant Sinha, fellow Bihari, and Indian Administrative Service-turned Minister in the A.B. Vajpayee cabinet, "We faced struggle and jail. In Delhi, there are intellectuals like you who are always in power...."

The communities that were mobilised by Mr. Yadav (and his counterparts in Uttar Pradesh such as Mulayam Singh Yadav and Kanshi Ram), the Hindu subalterns, over the decades, sensed the contempt they faced in the English world, particularly when more of them were educated. They would in turn be attracted to the BJP's pitch for honour within Hindu society. That turned out to be the moment for what scholar Sajjan Kumar terms subaltern Hindutva that Mr. Modi mobilised in 2014. In 2024, its contradictions are surfacing, but the reckoning of 2014 was long in the making.

Vernacular, subaltern secularism

In the early 2000s, when the BJP was gradually moving to the centre stage of Indian politics, Alok Rai wrote this about the need for vernacularising – more specifically, Hindi-fying – secular values in order to communicate with masses. He said, "The social privilege enjoyed by this (English) elite becomes...a serious liability for the secular and modern value package espoused by them....The English elite will be condemned to confront in the political battlefield the popular energies which Hindi can command with relative ease. The strategic location of the English elite in the apparatuses of power may delay the day of reckoning.....The overwhelming social dominance of English is a threat to certain other things which they value like secularism, like the struggle for a modern society..The association with English and the class that lives off English has become a serious liability for those valued goals."

The expansion across the subcontinent, of what is today called Hinduism, over millennia, is a story of constant vernacularisation and regionalisation of the traditions that were formed in northwestern regions of the country, called Aryavarta in ancient texts. In new terrains and among new peoples, the carriers of those traditions sought connections by negotiating with local practices. The historian, R. Champakalakshmi, describes this as a process of "interaction, acculturation and accommodation and often confrontation between different zones of language and culture." This continues into the Hindutva project as well – for instance, in Mr. Modi's outreach to Tamils.

Secular inquisitors travelled in the opposite direction, cancelling people and practices for the slightest of disagreements and even labelling them regressive or communal. And, with the focus entirely on inter-religious relations and negligence of intra-religious justice, distanced secularism from the subalterns. "Intra-religious domination, i.e., religion-related patriarchy and caste domination, fanaticism, bigotry and extremism got ignored," writes political theorist Rajeev Bhargava. "...as the intra-religious dimension was ejected from the meaning of secularism...,much to the detriment of its overall value, secularism began to be identified, by proponents and opponents alike, exclusively with the defence of minority rights...especially Muslims."

The contest, the challenge

There is subaltern Hindutva, but the question in 2024 is whether there can be subaltern secularism. Mr. Modi and his principal opponent, Rahul Gandhi, are framing the general election as a choice between subaltern Hindutva versus subaltern secularism. Both of them are facing resistance within their parties to this subalternisation. Mr. Gandhi has brought questions of caste justice into mainstream Congress thinking, besides partnering with parties such as RJD, the Samajwadi Party and the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, that represent subaltern groups but also carry their own baggage. But the real challenge before him is reconciling his party's old elitism with the inescapable turn to the subaltern terrain where the numbers are aggregated. The question is whether he can force Mr. Aiyar to meet Mr. Yadav.

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There is subaltern Hindutva, but the question in the 2024 general election is whether there can be subaltern secularism

The case for election day as a holiday

Americai V. Narayanan

is an active politician of the Indian National Congress, a columnist and a political analyst

In a vibrant democracy such as India, the right to vote is not just a privilege but also a fundamental duty enshrined in the Constitution. Several countries around the world such as Australia (where voting is mandatory), South Africa, South Korea, France provide a holiday on election day to facilitate voter participation.

Recent discussions have brought to light an intriguing debate surrounding the obligation of employers, particularly Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), to declare a holiday on election day. While some argue for the sanctity of this practice, citing constitutional principles, others question its necessity and potential infringement on individual liberties. Interestingly, several member-countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (made up largely of advanced democracies) conduct their national elections on a weekend. Other democratic nations such as the United States do not mandate election day as a paid holiday. Some States in the U.S. make election day as a paid holiday, while some do not. However, a study published by Princeton University, about 'Increasing Voter Turnout' said, "The results are clear. There is no evidence from the 'natural experiment' of states providing an election holiday for state employees that such holidays significantly increase voter turnout", concluding that "having an election holiday, by itself, is not an effective strategy to increase voter turnout."

The issue of a balance

The mandate for employers to declare a holiday on election day raises pertinent questions about the balance between civic responsibility and personal freedoms. Should businesses be compelled to provide a paid day off when voting is not obligatory? Is it fair to impose such obligations on employers?

Advocates for mandatory holiday declaration argue that the Constitution of India upholds the right to vote as a fundamental aspect of democratic governance. Therefore, ensuring access to polling booths by granting employees a day off is seen as a practical means to uphold this constitutional mandate. Additionally, organisations such as the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), and National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM), as representatives of the business community, are expected to align with broader societal goals, including facilitating voter participation.

The counterargument to this perspective emphasises individual freedom and the principles of a free market economy. In a democracy, citizens are granted the liberty to choose whether or not to exercise their right to vote. By extension, employers should also have the discretion to determine their operational policies, including whether to provide a paid holiday on election day. Compelling them to do so may be perceived as an infringement on their autonomy and could potentially create undue burdens, especially for smaller businesses with limited resources. Comparisons with other democracies, such as the U.S., further complicate the matter. In the U.S., election day is not designated as a national holiday, and the onus is on individuals to manage their schedules to cast their votes. While some States have implemented provisions for paid time off to vote, it is not universally mandated at the federal level.

What should India do?

This raises questions about whether India should follow a similar approach, allowing for flexibility and adaptation to varying business needs and cultural contexts. The recent effort by the Home Secretary of Tamil Nadu, P. Amudha, suggesting linking paid leave to proof of voting introduces an interesting middle ground in this debate. By incentivising voter turnout while maintaining employer discretion, this proposal addresses both the importance of civic engagement and the concerns of businesses regarding operational disruptions. Employees would have the opportunity to exercise their democratic rights while also fulfilling their professional responsibilities, thereby striking a balance between individual liberties and societal obligations.

In perspective

Ultimately, the question of election day holiday mandates transcends mere legalities and delves into the essence of democracy itself. It is about fostering a culture of civic engagement while respecting the diverse needs and circumstances of both citizens and businesses. Rather than imposing rigid mandates, policymakers should explore innovative solutions that encourage voter participation without unduly burdening employers. As technology progresses sometime in the future, we may be able to vote, without any undue influence, in the privacy of our homes. The debate surrounding the obligation of employers to declare a holiday on election day is a nuanced one that touches upon fundamental principles of democracy, individual freedoms, and economic realities. While the Constitution underscores the importance of voting rights, it is imperative to strike a balance that respects both civic obligations and business autonomy. By fostering dialogue and exploring flexible solutions, India can uphold its democratic ethos while accommodating the dynamic needs of its diverse society.

The views expressed are personal

The issue must be seen as one that delves into the essence of democracy itself

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Reporting exam success

I write this letter as president, Devendrakula Vellalar Nala Sangam, Tambaram, Chennai. On the issue of examination results, it is the usual procedure for newspapers to publish the details of the first three rank holders — their names, ranks and marks, and their school. In some cases, there are details about the family background.

This year, the media published the details of the girl who secured the first rank in the Tamil Nadu Class X State Board examination (Tamil Nadu, Page 1, May 11), highlighting in the heading, the point that she is a Dalit. When the girl secured the top rank, i.e., 499 marks out of 500, by dint of her hard work, how does caste come into the picture?

The mention of caste conveys a negative perception about the abilities of a certain group of people; it is made out to be a wonder.

Second, there are repeated instructions from the central and State governments to the effect that when mentioning Scheduled Caste, only the word in English, "Scheduled caste", or the exact translation in other regional languages should be used. Words such as "Dalit" should not be used.

S. Chelladurai,
Chennai

On the AIADMK

Many political analysts are now commenting on the once powerful All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK). It is quite evident that the party is losing strength. In the last election, there was no anti-incumbency as such towards the ruling AIADMK. The party now stands between Scylla and Charybdis. It has to tackle the strong Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam government and also face a growing threat in the form of the BJP. The goal for the party should be to 'arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached'.

V. Chandrasekaran,
Jeeyapuram, Tiruchi

Order an audit

The strong winds in Mumbai which led to the collapse of a huge hoarding should push local bodies to order the safety audit of all billboards and huge hoardings across the country. There are a number of such unauthorised or unsafe installations in cities and on highways. With weather patterns changing, the issue of safety and people's lives cannot be ignored.

Ramesh G. Jethwani,
Bengaluru

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

Social media's impact on Indian politics

"If Congress wins this election, it will be because of Dhruv Rathee," declares a young Muslim man in Uttar Pradesh. Another group of young Jatav men in Agra list out who they follow – Mr. Rathee is top on the list as are local online "influencers." Even a young supporter of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) from the Rawat community in Mohanlalganj admits that he regularly listens to Ravish on YouTube. Strikingly, almost everyone can recount the content – the details of the different shows and episodes of these influencers.

This is the first ever social media election in India. Social media has created avenues for alternate viewpoints outside of the spectre of state control and in the process successfully created a cognitive dissonance with the government narrative.

Yamini Aiyar
is Public Policy Scholar

Neelanjan Sircar
is Senior Fellow, Centre for Policy Research

Changing contours

Till recently, social media has been a tool deployed by the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself. In the early part of the decade, a "right wing ecosystem" emerged on social media to generate cognitive dissonance with the existing traditional media. The traditional media, in those early years did not indulge in active fear mongering. This was the role occupied by the right wing social media, which was openly politically colored and pushed the boundaries of decency with commentary on Muslims, women, and re-telling of history. As Kunal Purohit notes in his incisive book *H-Pop: The Secretive World of Hindutva Pop Stars*, "It provides ways to disseminate hate and stoke anger against minority groups and rivals each day, without ever becoming a tangible event, like a hate speech rally or a riot."

But things have changed, especially as traditional media began to echo much of the content from the right wing ecosystem, saturating the type of content that was received. People are not being fooled; even core BJP supporters recognise the extent of this control. In the words of a BJP supporter we spoke to, "The media only speaks for one side (the BJP)." With a more diverse population using mobile phones and as more people searched for alternate viewpoints, an opportunity was created for critical voices. Crucially, these voices don't align themselves with any political party, allowing them to garner the credibility vacated by the traditional media. Thus many we spoke to said that it was easier to get the true picture of what is happening in India through social media. Paradoxically, the traditional media's shift to more provocative, biased content for survival, may have ensured its death.

Influencers with views that challenge the dominant narrative have been quick to catch on, helped by the algorithms. A feature of the algorithms used in YouTube and Facebook is that content that is growing quickly in popularity will be boosted to the whole user base. Indeed, Mr. Rathee's video titled, "Is India becoming a DICTATORSHIP?", has already garnered 25 million views on YouTube. This is also certainly an undercount, as snippets of the video have been circulating all over social media platforms.

Social media has also offered a space for political engagement of an increasingly reticent voter, silenced due to the prevailing environment of fear. In Mohanlalganj, we meet a local Instagram influencer from the Jatav community who reads shairi and remains publicly apolitical. But his frustration against the BJP is growing. He tells us, "I see and hear everything. If I speak, I will have trouble."

Social media has most rapidly been adopted by the educated youth population. The youth was once viewed as the core support base for Mr. Modi. However, after 10 years, the aspiration is largely gone and for many, frustration has come in its place.

The Kurmi population is pivotal in many parts of central and eastern Uttar Pradesh. Once fully behind the BJP, division among them is palpable in Barabanki. Educated youth frustrated with the lack of jobs and armed with a narrative derived from social media, have moved away from the BJP – and it shows in the results. In 2019, the BJP swept the Barabanki parliamentary constituency, but in the 2022 State election, it lost three of the five assembly constituencies that comprise the parliamentary constituency.

At a very basic level, this is a positive development. In a democracy, diversity of opinion and active contestation of political views are critical. That these spaces are being prised open is an indicator of the sites of democratic reclaiming that are emerging in India.

However, the long-term implications need greater interrogation. First, political narratives are now being shaped outside the formal party system. Traditionally, the party worker and the political intermediary presented voters with political narratives, connecting them with the political ideologies with which they were aligned – generating policy demands from the bottom up. But social media is making the party workers and intermediaries less relevant. This enables greater centralisation within political parties, as the leader can directly shape narratives. Algorithms also ensure deeper polarisation. What this will do to party structures and more significantly the public sphere remains to be seen.

Regardless, the emergence of social media as the key player in this election has everything to do with the complete abdication of the bulk of traditional media from its professional purpose of framing political issues with credibility. What does this portend for reasoned discussion and the health of Indian democracy? This is the question that the 2024 election raises.

The traditional media's shift to more provocative, biased content for survival, may have ensured its death

Conflict with pachyderm pathways

Kadar tribesman's death due to an elephant attack sparks concern in Tamil Nadu

STATE OF PLAY

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The recent death of a Kadar tribesman in Tamil Nadu's Anamalai Tiger Reserve in an elephant attack has left the indigenous community and conservationists in shock as Kadars are known to co-exist with wild elephants for ages. This is the latest glimpse of the escalating human-elephant negative interactions in Tamil Nadu, largely stemming from reasons including habitat degradation, developmental works in forest buffers and obstructions in critical elephant movement paths or corridors, which link two or more habitats.

Taking serious note of the imminent danger, the Tamil Nadu government formed a panel to identify elephant corridors. The panel, headed by Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests V. Naganathan, reassessed the existing corridors in the State, including the ones identified in studies conducted by the Project Elephant Division of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and the Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) in the past.

The panel released a list of 42 elephant corridors a month ago and invited comments from the public on the draft report till May 5. The environmentalists hailed the report, as it doubled the number of corridors in the State against the 20 corridors identified in the Project Elephant Division's report in 2023 and 19 corridors identified by the WTI.

The elephant population in Tamil Nadu stood at 2,961 in 26 forest divisions according

to the synchronised census done in southern States in 2023. The conflict scenario is intense in Coimbatore, Gudalur, Hosur and Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve (STR), leading to the deaths of elephants and humans.

'Unnatural deaths'

As per the Tamil Nadu Elephant Death Audit Framework, a total of 1,593 elephants died of various reasons in the State from 2010, of which 168 were classified as 'unnatural deaths'. Electrocution was the main cause of these unnatural deaths followed by bait bombs, poisoning, road accidents, train collisions and hunting.

Most unnatural deaths occur outside forests when elephants traverse through the forest peripheries as they prefer flat lands for movement between habitats. They often get electrocuted while trying to enter plantations protected by farmers using AC-powered illegal fences.

Many elephants got electrocuted after getting in contact with sagging power lines when they traversed through villages on forest peripheries. Bait bombs or crude explosives meant to hunt wild animals like deer and wild boar also claimed the lives of some of the pachyderms.

Biologists and elephant experts believe that securing elephant corridors and ensuring safe movement paths for elephants could curtail a lion's share of such deaths. These corridors also help in maintaining sustainable populations of the national heritage animal, with rich genetic diversity.

The draft corridor report, however, did not satisfy every stakeholder, as expected. A few farmers' organisations opposed the report, for reasons ranging from fear of losing land adjoining forest areas and imposition of restrictions, including increased buffer zones outside forests.

The Communist Party of India wanted the government to withdraw the draft. The party's district committee in Erode district, where the STR is situated, claimed that the notification of the corridors mentioned in the draft would affect the livelihood of local people. The 161-page draft was not made available in Tamil and limited time was given for comments, it charged.

AIADMK General Secretary and Leader of the Opposition Edappadi K. Palaniswami also wanted the draft to be released in Tamil to comprehend the plan better.

Meanwhile, Kadeswara C. Subramaniam, State president of the right wing organisation Hindu Munnani, alleged that the draft report was a plot to restrict people's access to temples in forests.

In the wake of these objections, the Forest Department has now decided to hold public hearings in each forest range district before it finalises its report and submits it to the government. Hopefully, a meaningful dialogue would emerge from these hearings and an amicable solution for peaceful human-animal coexistence could be found.

Manipur accounted for 97% of displacements in South Asia

New report reveals 69,000 displacements in South Asia due to conflict, with Manipur violence accounting for 67,000

DATA POINT

Press Trust of India and Agence France-Presse

Conflict and violence triggered 69,000 displacements in South Asia in 2023, with Manipur violence accounting for 67,000, according to a new report. The report by the Geneva-based Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) termed it the highest number of displacements triggered by conflict and violence in India since 2018.

On May 3, 2023, a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in Manipur's hill districts to protest against the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status. The march led to ethnic clashes between the Meitei and the Kuki communities, ultimately claiming more than 200 lives. The Manipur High Court had in March last year called for recommendations to be sent to the Union government to recognise the Meitei community as a "Scheduled Tribe," an official status designed to protect minorities from marginalisation.

The call was met with resistance from other local STs, including the Kukis. Land disputes were also an underlying driver of the tensions. "Protests turned violent in Churachandpur district on May 3, and the violence spread to other districts, including Imphal East, Imphal West, Bishnupur, Tengnoupal, and Kangpokpi, triggering around 67,000 displacements," the report said. **Chart 1** shows internal displacements in India each year, between 2009 and 2023. An internal displacement refers to the forced movement of a person, within the borders of a country. This term refers to the events or occurrences that cause people to be displaced internally and not the number of individuals displaced. Also, the same set of people can be displaced several times over.

More than three-quarters of the movements took place within Manipur, but almost a fifth were to the neighbouring State of Mizoram and smaller numbers to Nagaland and Assam. As the violence escalated, the Union government imposed curfews, shut down the internet, and dispatched security forces. It also set up relief camps and established a peace committee for Manipur but the initiative was hampered by disagreements about its composition.

Chart 2 shows the internally displaced people currently living in India. This term focuses on the individuals who have been displaced and gives the number of persons displaced at the end of every year. At the end of 2023, there were 0.61 million such persons in India. The report said that 68.3 million people worldwide were displaced by conflict and violence as of 2023. Over the past five years, the number of internally displaced people resulting from conflict has increased by 22.6 million, with the two biggest increases in 2022 and 2023.

Map 3 shows the country-wise number of internally displaced persons as of 2023.

Fighting in Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Palestinian territories accounted for nearly two-thirds of new movements of people due to conflict in 2023. Throughout 2023, there were six million forced movements of people caused by the violence in Sudan – more than in the previous 14 years combined. It is the second-highest number of forced movements within a year after Ukraine's 16.9 million in 2022. World over, in 2023, the number of internal displacements (occurrences) resulting from conflict was 20.5 million.

Displacements can also happen due to natural disasters. If those numbers are included, the total internally displaced persons go up to a record 75.9 million (7.7 million by disasters) by the end of 2023. The figure was up from 71.1 million at the end of 2022.

Displaced due to conflict

The data for internal displacements and internally displaced people in India is sourced from Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

As historical grievances resurface between the ethnic groups, violence has forced large numbers of both groups to become displaced and seek shelter. (Photo by Ritesh Shukla/ Getty Images)

Chart 1: The chart shows the number of internal displacements in India from 2009 to 2023

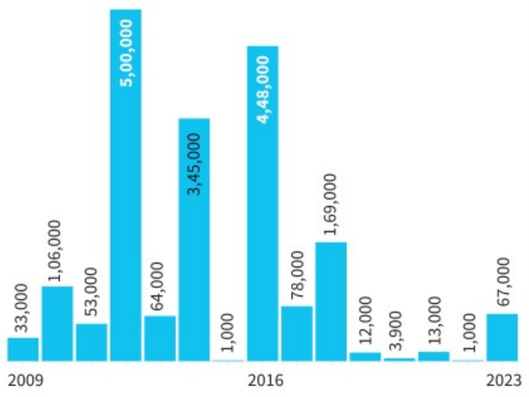
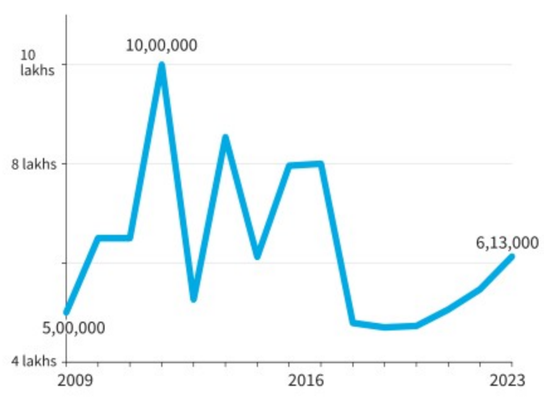
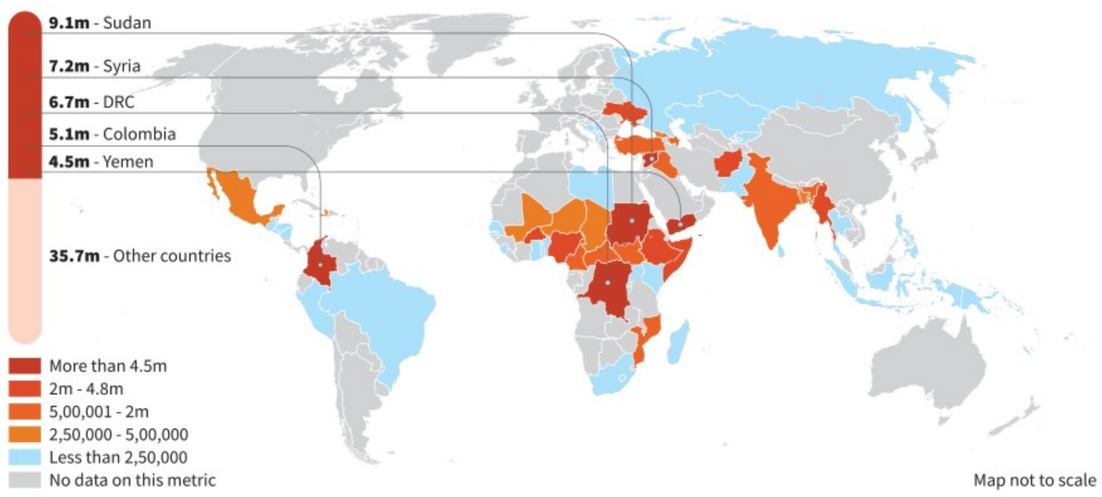


Chart 2: The chart shows the total number of internally displaced people in India due to conflict and violence (2009 to 2023)



Map 3: The map shows internally displaced people as a result of conflict and violence in 66 countries and territories, as of 31 December 2023.



FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO MAY 16, 1974

Two U.S. firms chosen for oil exploration

New Delhi, May 15: Two U.S. firms, the Carlsberg Petroleum Corporation of Los Angeles and the Reading and Bates Offshore Drilling Company of Tulsa (Oklahoma), have been finally chosen by the Government of India for conducting off-shore exploration for crude oil in India's continental shelf. Carlsberg has been assigned the off-shore area adjoining the Bengal coast, while Reading and Bates will do the exploration in the off-shore areas adjoining Kutch.

Under the contracts, which have been signed with the two companies, they will do the off-shore exploration starting with a seismic survey and will employ their own technical and engineering personnel and equipment. The companies will carry out the exploration at their own risk and will not be entitled for any payment from the Government. If they find that the areas are not oil-bearing and they have to wind up their operations.

If, however, they find commercially exploitable oil, the Government of India will have ownership rights over 70 per cent of the oil thus found. The companies are understood to have agreed to sell the entire balance 30 per cent of the oil to the Government at agreed prices. The payment for these sales will go towards reimbursing the two companies for the expenditure they incur on oil exploration. This phase is expected to last three or four years.

In the second phase, when the two companies enter into partnership with the Government, the terms of contract provide for 20 per cent participation by the companies while the Government will have 70 per cent.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MAY 16, 1924

Governor on boycott.

Nairobi, May 15: Following the recent elections held under the new constitution the legislature was opened by Governor Coryndon on May 14th. Indians were not present. In the course of a lengthy address Sir. R. Coryndon was optimistic about the future of the country and regretted India's absence, but asked all to implement the white paper. He urged that official action must be taken by the Colonial Office to rebut accusations made in the English press and the Commons and India against settlers in the Colony.

From Page One

Prabir Purkayastha's arrest invalid, says SC

Justice Mehta said, like arrests, the grounds of detention should also be communicated in writing to a detainee. Any lapse would be a violation of Article 22(5) of the Constitution, which mandates that a person under detention should be communicated the grounds of the detention order and allowed to make a representation against the detention at the earliest opportunity.

Communication of grounds of arrest or detention in writing by the investigating agency or police was "sacrosanct and cannot be breached under any situation". "Non-compliance of this constitutional requirement and statutory mandate would lead to the custody or the detention being rendered illegal," the Supreme Court declared. Providing arrested persons or their lawyers the written grounds of arrest was made mandatory under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) by the top court in its *Pankaj Bansal case* judgment in 2023. The court has extended the same rule to UAPA cases through the current verdict in Mr. Purkayastha's case.

Mr. Purkayastha was arrested by the Delhi Police Special Cell on October 3, 2023. Mr. Purkayastha's request to provide him a copy of the FIR was ignored by the police.

He was given a copy only after he was remanded in police custody by a Sessions Judge at 6 a.m. on October 4, 2023. The senior journalist's lawyer, advocate Arshdeep Khurana, was informed about the grounds of arrest on October 5, that is, 24 hours after his client was remanded in police custody.

'Clandestine exercise'

In short, the Supreme Court concluded that Mr. Purkayastha was left heavily handicapped when his personal liberty was hanging by a thread on October 4 morning.

"This entire exercise was done in a clandestine manner and was nothing but a blatant attempt to circumvent the due process of law; to confine the accused to police custody without informing him the grounds on which he has been arrested; deprive the accused of the opportunity to avail himself of the services of the legal practitioner of his choice so as to oppose the prayer for police custody remand, seek bail and also to mislead the court," Justice Mehta concluded in a scathing judgment.

Additional Solicitor General S.V. Raju, for the Delhi Police, had argued that Mr. Purkayastha was "orally" informed about the grounds of his arrest.

April trade deficit hits 4-month high of $19 bn

They cautioned that the rupee and the current account deficit could come under pressure if international oil and gold prices remain firm.

Apart from oil and gold, 14 more commodities that figure in India's major import items, reported an uptick in April, including pulses (up 172.3%), fruits and vegetables (27.7%), medicines and pharmaceuticals (18.4%) and electronics (10%).

On the other hand, as many as 17 of the top 30 export items recorded contractions in April, including engineering goods (-3.2%), gems and jewellery (-6.9%), leather (-7.2%), man-made yarn (-6.3%) and readymade garments (-1%). Several agricultural goods continued to see a drop in shipments, including rice (-4.8%), fruits and vegetables (-6.8%), while marine products fell almost 13%.

Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal expressed the hope that the positive growth for merchandise exports in the first month of the fiscal year is a good omen. "The World Trade Organisation has a slightly better growth projection for this year and we are hopeful that things will improve in the western world in terms of growth rates and inflation reduction, improving trade prospects," he said.

Claims on lack of jobs are for electoral gain, says Minister

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Union Minister Anurag Thakur on Wednesday termed the allegations of the INDIA bloc on insufficient jobs as "misleading and hollow". Citing a report recently released by SKOCH Group, the Minister underscored that credit-led employment and Central government schemes-led employment had added more than 50 crore person years of employment during the decade that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been at the helm since 2014.

"The so-called Opposition alliance, which is no more than a rag-tag coalition of incompatible parties, is seeking to mislead people on jobs for petty electoral reasons," Mr. Thakur said in a statement here. The SKOCH report said that 5.14 crore person years of employment have been generated every year since 2014.

Over 300 people become Indian citizens under CAA

At least 14 applicants who came from Pakistan in 2013 were handed over the certificates by Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla; govt. did not disclose the country of origin of the applicants

Vijaita Singh
Samridhi Tewari
NEW DELHI

The Union government on Wednesday granted citizenship certificates to more than 300 people who applied under the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), 2019, a senior government official said.

At least 14 people were handed their certificates by Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla in Delhi, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said in a statement.

The country of origin of the applicants was not disclosed by the government, but a government source said that most applicants were Pakistani Hindus.

The 14 people who received the certificates in Delhi came from Pakistan in 2013.

Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla gives the first set of citizenship certificates under the CAA in New Delhi on Wednesday. PTI

The source said that as applications were being scrutinised and finalised, certificates were being sent by post to beneficiaries in other parts of the country. Most Pakistani Hindus who entered India legally are living in Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Haryana, Punjab, and Delhi.

The Hindu met the families who were granted citizenship in Delhi. They said it was the first time since coming to India on a tourist visa in 2013 that they had applied for citizenship.

Jhoola Ram, a resident of Majnu Ka Tila in north Delhi, said that a priest at a nearby temple had signed the eligibility certificate validating his religion. One of the documents required to apply under the CAA is an eligibility certificate issued by a "locally reputed community institution".

Another applicant, Seetal Das, said that a local NGO working with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) had signed the eligibility certificate.

"We will be able to get out of the *jhuggi* (slum) now. We have documents. I did not receive proper education, but now, my children will go to a better school. Citizenship means hope for us...," Mr. Das said. He added that citizenship had brought relief because he had been living with his family in Delhi on a tourist visa.

"Getting extension of tourist visa was another hassle because, who listens to poor people? It costs ₹2,000-4,000 per person," he added.

ED arrests Jharkhand Minister in PMLA case

Amit Bhelari
RANCHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday arrested Jharkhand Rural Development Minister and Congress leader Alamgir Alam on the second day of interrogation in a money laundering case.

The Central agency last week arrested Mr. Alam's Officer on Special Duty Sanjiv Kumar Lal and his domestic help Jahangir Alam after the seizure of more than ₹36 crore in cash from a flat linked to them.

The investigation pertains to alleged irregularities in the State Rural Development Department.

The searches at the residence of Mr. Lal and the domestic help were conducted in connection with the ongoing investigation in the money laundering case against Virendra Ram, former chief engineer of the Rural Development Ministry.

Probe agencies must give written grounds of arrest, says SC

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday held that the right to life and personal liberty is the most sacrosanct of fundamental rights while declaring that investigating agencies should provide people arrested under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) with a written copy of information specifying the grounds of their arrest.

A Bench of Justices B.R. Gavai and Sandeep Mehta applied its earlier judgment in the *Pankaj Bansal* case – which had held that an arrested person should be informed of the grounds of arrest under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) – to UAPA cases.

"The purpose of informing to the arrested person the grounds of arrest is salutary and sacrosanct inasmuch as, this information would be the only effective means for the arrested person to consult his advocate; oppose the police custody remand and to seek bail. Any other interpretation would [be] tantamount to diluting the sanctity of the fundamental right guaranteed under Article 22(1) of the Constitution. The Right to Life and Personal Liberty is the most sacrosanct fundamental right," the court held in the Prabir Purkayastha case judgment on Wednesday.

PMLA and UAPA

Justice Mehta, who authored the judgment, said that they found no significant difference in the language employed in Section 19(1) of the PMLA and Section 43B(1) of the UAPA. The provisions in both Acts deal with the power and procedure of arrest.

The Union government had objected to the idea of extending the ambit of the Pankaj Bansal judgment to UAPA cases. Additional Solicitor-General S.V. Raju had argued that the Pankaj Bansal judgment dealt only with arrests under the PMLA and not the UAPA.

Purkayastha released from Tihar after getting bail; he must not contact witnesses

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

NewsClick founder and editor Prabir Purkayastha was released from the Tihar Jail on Wednesday, hours after the Supreme Court declared his arrest "invalid" and a Delhi court granted him bail. Mr. Purkayastha had been lodged in the jail since November 2 last year.

Additional Sessions Judge Hardeep Kaur directed Mr. Purkayastha's release on furnishing bail bonds worth ₹1 lakh, on the condition that he shall not contact the witnesses and approvers associated with the case. The court also directed him not to talk about the merits of the case or travel abroad without the court's permission.

The lawyer representing the special cell of the Delhi Police had earlier requested the court to set the condition that Mr. Purkayastha must not contact anyone whose name is "reflected" in the chargesheet but later decided not to press for it. Advocate Arshdeep Singh, representing Mr. Purkayastha, pointed out that the name of Githa Hariharan, his client's partner, was also in the chargesheet.

Prabir Purkayastha, founder of *NewsClick*, after his release from Tihar Jail in New Delhi on Wednesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Mr. Purkayastha was arrested by the Delhi Police's special cell on October 3, 2023 for allegedly receiving money to peddle pro-China propaganda through *NewsClick*.

In the first information report (FIR), the police booked him under Sections 13 (unlawful activities), 16 (terrorist act), 17 (raising funds for terrorist acts), 18 (conspiracy) and 22C (offences by companies, trusts) of the UAPA, apart from Section 153 A (promoting enmity between different groups) and 120B (criminal conspiracy) of the Indian Penal Code.

The FIR came days after *The New York Times* published a report on August 8, 2023, claiming that the news portal received money from American millionaire Neville Roy Singham, allegedly an "active member of Propaganda department of the Communist Party of China", to distort the map of India by projecting Kashmir and Arunachal Pradesh as disputed territory. The police alleged that Mr. Purkayastha received ₹115 crore worth of foreign funds.

The special cell searched 88 locations in Delhi and seven States as part of its investigation. Around 300 electronic gadgets were seized from the offices of *NewsClick*.

(With PTI inputs)

India working to repatriate body of Colonel Kale

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

India is in contact with "relevant authorities" after UN Security Coordination Officer Colonel Waibhav Anil Kale was killed in Gaza on Monday. An official statement from the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) stated that Indian officials are in the process of getting the mortal remains of the former officer of the Indian Army repatriated.

"Our Permanent Mission to the UN in New York and our Missions in Tel Aviv and Ramallah are extending all assistance in the repatriation of mortal remains to India and continue to be in touch with relevant authorities regarding the investigation in the incident," the official statement said.

"We are deeply saddened by the death of Colonel Waibhav Anil Kale (retd), Security Coordination Officer in the UN Department of Safety and Security in Gaza on 13 May 2024. We extend our heartfelt condolences to his family and dear ones," the MEA said, without specifying the source of the attack that killed the officer.

'Many feel bail to Kejriwal was special treatment'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Home Minister Amit Shah has said there is a general feeling that the Supreme Court's decision to grant interim bail to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in the excise policy case is akin to him getting special treatment. The judgment was not a routine judicial order, the BJP leader added in a conversation with the media.

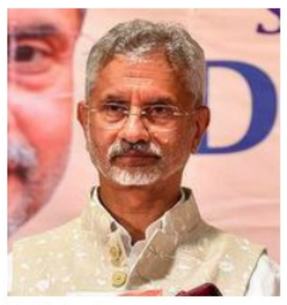
He attacked the AAP supremo's comments in an election rally, where he said that "if you vote for *jhaadu* (the AAP's symbol), it will ensure I do not return to jail." Mr. Shah said this was a "clear contempt of the SC".

Chabahar will benefit the region, U.S. should not take narrow view: Minister

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

India will "work at" explaining that the Chabahar port is in the region's interest, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said, responding to the U.S. government's remarks about the "potential risk" of sanctions to companies working on the India-Iran joint venture.

Mr. Jaishankar pointed out that the U.S. had in the past appreciated the importance of the Chabahar port project, referring to its use in supporting aid and trade with Afghanistan. He said the agreement signed on Monday was simply a long-pending long-term contract that had been delayed by negotiations and changes in the joint venture partner on the Iranian end.



S. Jaishankar

Answering a number of questions at a public function in Kolkata on Tuesday, Mr. Jaishankar also hit out at the U.S. and the Western media for trying to "dominate the narrative" and influence the ongoing elections in India.

"I did see some of the remarks which were made, but I think it's a question of communicating, convincing and getting people to understand, that this is actually for everyone's benefit," Mr. Jaishankar said, when asked about comments by the U.S. State Department over the Iran-India agreement. He said the U.S. and others should not take a "narrow view" of it.

"If you look at the U.S.'s own attitude towards the port in Chabahar, the U.S. has been appreciative of the fact that Chabahar has a larger relevance... so, we will work at it," he added.

Mr. Jaishankar was referring to the U.S. exemption from sanctions for the Chabahar port project that was granted in 2018, when the Trump Administration amended the U.S. law on Iranian sanctions to add a carve-out for projects that supported "reconstruction assistance or economic development for Afghanistan" provided they were in the "national interest of the United States", as Chabahar was judged to be, prior to the withdrawal of U.S. troops and the Taliban takeover of Kabul in 2021.

The U.S. Embassy in Delhi indicated that clarity on the matter could take some time. "We are aware of reports that Iran and India signed a deal concerning Chabahar port. I cannot speak to the potential impact of U.S. sanctions on a deal that has just been made public," U.S. Embassy spokesperson Chris Elms told *The Hindu*.

Army set to receive next batch of shoulder-fired Igla-S air defence systems

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

The Army is all set to begin receiving another set of Russian Igla-S very short range air defence systems (VSHORAD) by the end of May or early next month, filling a critical void in its air defence requirements which has been repeatedly delayed.

In another development, multiple sources confirmed that the payments issue between India and Russia that has held up critical payments for defence deals as well as payments has been resolved.

The Igla-S systems were contracted last year under the fourth tranche of Emergency Procurements (EP) and are being assembled by Adani Defence Systems And Technologies Limited (ADSTL) in India under technology transfer from Rosoboronexport, multiple official sources confirmed.

The Igla-S system.

The Army is also set to receive the first of two Israeli Hermes-900 Medium Altitude Long Endurance Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) assembled by ADSTL in Hyderabad next month.

Last year, the Army contracted 48 Igla-S launchers, 100 missiles, 48 night sights, and one missile testing station under a ₹260 crore contract and deliveries are set to begin by end of this May, a source said.

The missile will be imported and some parts like sights, launcher, and battery will be assembled/manufactured here by Adani defence, another source in the know said.

A VSHORAD is the soldier's last line of defence against enemy combat aircraft, helicopters and UAVs in the multilayered air defence network.

ELECTIONS 2024

Will give outside support to INDIA: Mamata

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said at a poll rally on Wednesday that she would "provide outside support" to the INDIA bloc in the interest of the people of the State.

Ms. Banerjee, who has been maintaining that the CPI(M) and the Congress were helping the BJP in the State, continued to differentiate between the parties' leadership at the State and the national levels.

"You must know this that in the INDIA bloc, don't count the Bengal Congress and CPI(M). Those two are not with us. I am talking about Delhi," she said. Political observers say the comments are aimed at getting support of the Congress and Left voters when most of the seats in south Bengal are going to the polls.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee at a rally in Howrah on Wednesday. PTI

BJP petitions EC against Rahul's Army remark

The BJP on Wednesday urged the Election Commission to take action against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for his remarks that the Narendra Modi government has created two categories of soldiers, one comprising those from poor families, and the other from rich families.

A party delegation approached the EC and lodged a complaint.

"This [the remark] is a lie. This is an attack on our armed forces. This is not a topic of elections. This is a matter of national security," Union Minister S. Jaishankar, who was a part of the delegation, told presspersons.

Mr. Gandhi had made the reported remarks at a recent poll rally in Rae Bareli while attacking the Modi government over the Agnipath recruitment scheme. PTI

> They call us corrupt. But the Cong. could not become a rich party in 55 years, but BJP has become the richest party in the world within 10 years
>
> **PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA**
> Congress leader

Nobody more Mumbaikar than me: Goyal

Union Minister Piyush Goyal, who is the BJP's candidate from Mumbai North, hit out at the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi on Wednesday for calling him an outsider, saying it was making ridiculous arguments. "There can be nobody more Mumbaikar than me," he said. PTI

> But even by his own pathetic standards, Modi's latest claim that he does not do Hindu-Muslim politics shows the new depths he reaches daily in lying
>
> **JAIRAM RAMESH**
> Congress leader

Poll issue: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi addressing the youth impacted by the Agnipath scheme in New Delhi on May 4. ANI

Youth Congress intensifies drive against Agnipath

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Haryana, Punjab, and Himachal Pradesh, which are known for sending their youth to the armed forces in large numbers, are now the key States for the Congress in its campaign against the Agnipath recruitment scheme.

Under the Agnipath scheme, only a quarter of recruited soldiers or Agniveers are selected for permanent service; the rest retire after four years. In its manifesto, the Congress had promised to end the Agnipath scheme and revert to the old recruitment system.

The Youth Congress had launched an interactive voice recorded helpline to explain the party's 25 guarantees, including the one on scrapping the Agnipath scheme. However, the Election Commission told the Congress to stop the helpline or any app that sought an OTP from users.

'Justice for youth'

With polling in Haryana, Punjab, and Himachal Pradesh slated for the last two phases, the party is now making a bid to reach young voters by intensifying its door-to-door campaign.

"Rahul Gandhi*ji* had launched a Jai Jawan campaign to secure justice for over 1.5 lakh youth, who had cleared the entrance exam and physical test and were waiting for their appointment letters, and were told to become Agniveers. Now, we are going door to door to talk about Yuva *nyay* (justice)," Youth Congress president Srinivas B.V. said.

The Youth Congress is also focussing on promoting the Congress's own proposals, such as the *Pehli Naukri Pakki*, or first job assurance scheme that promises a stipend of ₹1 lakh for a year-long internship, its guarantee to give 30 lakh government jobs by August 15 if elected, the promise to create a start-up fund with a corpus of ₹5,000 crore, and the Mahalakshmi cash assistance scheme for women. "We are certain that this time, the youth of the country will support us for a better future," Mr. Srinivas said.

CARTOONSCAPE | SOUMYADIP SINHA

Heirs, veterans test their might in Phase 5 election in Bihar

Five constituencies go to the polls in the State on May 20; in Saran, Lalu Prasad's daughter Rohini Acharya is taking on Rajiv Pratap Rudy; Chirag Paswan is battling to win the Hajipur seat represented by his father, Ram Vilas Paswan, eight times

OVERVIEW

Amarnath Tewary
PATNA

The Saran Lok Sabha constituency in Bihar used to be a Rashtriya Janata Dal bastion where party chief Lalu Prasad had won the election thrice. In the 2024 election, Rohini Acharya, the Singapore-based daughter of Mr. Prasad, is in the fray in the constituency, which is going to the polls in the fifth phase of the Lok Sabha election.

Along with Saran, polling will be held in Hajipur, Muzaffarpur, Madhubani and Sitamarhi on May 20.

In 1977-79, Mr. Prasad went to Parliament from the erstwhile Chhapra constituency (which became Saran in 2009 after delimitation) at the age of 29 on Janata Party ticket. Later, he won the Assembly election from Sonepur, in the Saran limits, in 1980 and 1985. Mr. Prasad became an MP again in 1989, but resigned in 1990 to become the Chief Minister of Bihar.

In 2009, he contested the Lok Sabha election from Saran and won. His wife, Rabri Devi, though, lost the seat in 2014 to Rajiv Pratap Rudy of the BJP. In 2019, the RJD fielded Chandrika Rai, father-in-law of Mr. Prasad's son Tej Pratap Yadav. But Mr. Rai, who comes from an influential Yadav family in the area and whose father Daroga Prasad Rai was a Chief Minister of Bihar, lost to Mr. Rudy.

This year, following marital discord between Mr. Tej Pratap and his wife, Mr. Rai has come out in support of Mr. Rudy. The RJD has fielded Ms. Acharya. Saran has an almost equal number of Yadavs and Rajput voters. The Yadavs often support Mr. Prasad, while the Rajputs favour Mr. Rudy.

'Dynastic politics'

Ms. Acharya's nomination has invited criticism from the BJP, citing it as an example of dynastic politics. Deputy Chief Minister and BJP leader Samrat Choudhary even alleged that the RJD chief has given ticket to his daughter in lieu of the kidney she has donated to him.

With declared assets worth ₹36 crore, Ms. Acharya is the richest candidate in Phase 5 of the Bihar election. After her, Congress candidate Ajay Nishad (₹29 crore) and Raj Bhushan Choudhary of the BJP (₹16 crore), both contesting the Muzaffarpur seat, are the richest.

In the Hajipur (reserved) seat, the contest is between Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) leader Chirag Paswan and RJD candidate Shiv Chandra Ram. The united Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) founder, the late Ram Vilas Paswan, had represented Hajipur eight times. In the 2019 election, Mr. Paswan fielded his younger brother Pashupati Kumar Paras, who too won the seat.

Mr. Chirag was elected from another reserved seat in Bihar, Jamui. But, a year after Ram Vilas Paswan's death in October 2020, the LJP split into the Chirag-led LJP (Ram Vilas) and the Paras-led Rashtriya Lok Janshakti Party.

Mr. Paras was a Union Minister, but when the BJP teamed up with Mr. Chirag in Bihar for the Lok Sabha election, the leader, who had set his sights on the Hajipur seat again, resigned from the Cabinet. Later, he announced his support to the BJP. However, he is yet to campaign for his estranged nephew.

In Sitamarhi, the sitting JD(U) MP, Sunil Kumar Pintu, was dropped in favour of the Chairman of the State Legislative Council, Devesh Chandra Thakur, who is considered close to Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. The RJD has fielded Arjun Ray.

In the 2019 election, Mr. Pintu defeated Mr. Ray by over 2.5 lakh votes. In 2009, Mr. Ray won the seat on JD(U) ticket, but later, switched to the RJD. This time, Mr. Pintu wanted to contest on BJP ticket, but, under the NDA's seat-sharing arrangement, the seat fell into the JD(U)'s kitty and the party chose Mr. Thakur.

Vital issue

In Madhubani, Ashok Yadav of the BJP defeated Vikashil Insaan Party (VIP) candidate Badri Kumar Purbey by over 4.5 lakh votes in 2019. But this time, the *Mahagathbandhan* (grand alliance) has fielded Mohammed Ali Ashraf Fatmi (RJD) against Mr. Yadav, who is the son of former four-time MP from the seat and senior BJP leader Hukumdeo Narayan Yadav.

Madhubani has also been a stronghold of the Communist Party of India with the party winning the seat in 1989, 1991 and 1996. Brahmins, Muslims, Yadavs and Extremely Backward Class communities make up the majority of voters in the constituency where migration for livelihood due to floods is an vital issue.

In Muzaffarpur, the contest is between the BJP's Mr. Choudhary and the *Mahagathbandhan's* Mr. Nishad of the Congress. In 2019, Mr. Nishad won on BJP ticket defeating Mr. Choudhary, who had contested on VIP ticket. This time, when the BJP dropped Mr. Nishad, he joined the Congress.

Past results

Five key constituencies in Bihar will go to the polls on May 20. Here is a look at the 2019 Lok Sabha election results

Name of the constituency	Parties	Voteshare (in %)
Muzaffarpur	BJP	63.03
	Vikassheel Insaan Party	24.28
Madhubani	BJP	61.83
	Vikassheel Insaan Party	14.62
Sitamarhi	Janata Dal (United)	54.65
	Rashtriya Janata Dal	30.53
Hajipur (SC)	Lok Janshakti Party	53.76
	Rashtriya Janata Dal	33.36
Saran	BJP	53.02
	Rashtriya Janata Dal	38.34

Hectic: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar during a Lok Sabha election meeting, in Sitamarhi on May 13. PTI

Cong. targets BJP over video of man being beaten up in U.P.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Congress has targeted the BJP over a viral video of a man being beaten up by two homeguards in Uttar Pradesh's Bareilly district.

Former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi shared a video in which two homeguards, posted with the tehsildar of Nababganj, are seen beating a Dalit man, Virendra Kumar, for allegedly voting against the BJP despite getting free ration.

"What's being done to our countrymen? Brothers and sisters, this is the Constitution," Mr. Gandhi, holding a copy of the Constitution, said in a video posted on his X (formerly Twitter) handle.

"This protects the deprived people of India, protects you. The BJP, the RSS [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh] and Narendra Modi wants to finish this. If that happens, then every day, every moment, the thing that you saw in the video will happen with the deprived lot," he added.

In a similar post, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge explained why his party has been alleging that the BJP will change the Constitution, if it is voted to power again.

"Dalits, tribals, backward classes and the poor will be brutally suppressed. Dictatorship will prevail. Not only will the right to reservation be lost, but the fundamental right to vote will also be taken away," Mr. Kharge said.

In Jharkhand, BJP will battle to retain three seats in Phase 5

Amit Bhelari
RANCHI

Three Lok Sabha constituencies in Jharkhand will go to the polls in the fifth phase on May 20.

Apart from the polling in Hazaribagh, Koderma and Chatra, the State will also witness the Gandey Assembly byelection in which Kalpana Murmu Soren, wife of former Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren, is contesting as the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) candidate.

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate Dilip Verma is locked in a direct contest against Ms. Soren. The Gandey Assembly seat fell vacant after the resignation of JMM MLA Sarfaraz Ahmad, who is now a Rajya Sabha member.

The three Lok Sabha seats cover seven districts – Hazaribagh, Ramgarh, Koderma, Giridih, Chatra, Latehar and Palamu – having 16 Assembly constituencies.

Koderma is one of the prominent seats in Jharkhand where Union Minister and BJP candidate Annapurna Devi is in the fray against Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) candidate Vinod Singh, three-time MLA from Bagodar. However, JMM rebel leader Jai Prakash Verma has also filed the papers as an Independent candidate.

The Gandey Assembly segment comes under this constituency along with four other seats – Bagodar, Jamua, Dhanwar and Koderma.

Koderma was earlier represented by Jharkhand's first Chief Minister Babulal Marandi in 2004 after the State was carved out of Bihar.

Mica belt

Ms. Devi was earlier in the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) but shifted to the saffron party just months before the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. Ms. Devi had defeated Mr. Marandi in 2019 when he had contested the polls as a candidate of the Jharkhand Vikas Morcha (Prajatantrik). Ms. Devi got a 64.3% vote share whereas Mr. Marandi got 24.6%.

Koderma is famous for its mica belt and is also the place where India's first military school in Tilaiya was established. The Yadav and Kushwaha castes play a significant role in the elections as their numbers are sizeable among the population.

Another seat to watch out for is Hazaribagh, which was earlier represented by former Union Minister Yashwant Sinha. After him, his son Jayant Sinha won the seat twice and also became a Union Minister.

Since 2009, Hazaribagh has been represented by the BJP and it is considered a stronghold of the party.

Canvassing for votes: Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a public meeting in Koderma district of Jharkhand on Tuesday. PTI

Gandey Assembly bypoll will also be held on May 20 where Hemant Soren's wife is in the fray

In 2019, Mr. Jayant defeated Congress candidate Gopal Prasad Sahu by a huge margin of 4,79,548 votes. He had got 7,28,798 votes with a 67.42% vote share.

Despite getting such an unprecedented vote share, Mr. Jayant has been dropped this time and the BJP has fielded Manish Jaiswal as its nominee who is up against INDIA bloc and Congress candidate Jai Prakash Bhai Patel.

Hazaribagh will get a new face as its MP and a close electoral fight is expected as Mr. Patel is a former MLA for Mandu and represented the Assembly constituency for three terms. In March, Mr. Patel quit the ruling BJP and joined the Congress.

On Monday, Aashir Sinha, son of Mr. Jayant and grandson of Mr. Yashwant, attended an election rally of Mr. Patel in Barhi raising the talk of his potential entry into the Congress. However, Jharkhand Congress chief Rajesh Thakur told *The Hindu* that he just attended the rally and did not intend to join the party.

Chatra constituency

In the Chatra constitutency, there is a contest between two upper caste candidates. The population is dominated by Other Backward Classes (OBC), Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST). All three communities jointly have over 75% vote share but the contest is between Bhumihar and Brahmin candidates.

The BJP has fielded Kalicharan Singh, who comes from the Bhumihar caste, while the Congress has fielded Krishnandan Tripathi, a Brahmin leader. The BJP has dropped its two-term MP Sunil Kumar Singh, who won the seat in 2014 and 2019. In the previous election, Mr. Singh defeated Manoj Kumar Yadav of the Congress.

Mr. Kalicharan, who works as a teacher and is a resident of Chatra, has no experience of contesting any election. He is expecting to ride on the popularity of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

On May 11, Mr. Modi campaigned in Chatra for Mr. Singh and Hazaribagh candidate Mr. Jaiswal. On the other hand, Mr. Tripathi is a former MLA and former Minister.

A Naxal-affected constituency, Chatra was once a stronghold of RJD chief Lalu Prasad whose party won this seat twice in 1999 and 2004.

INBRIEF

PoK is part of India and we will take it, says Amit Shah

Describing "Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) as a part of India, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday said that slogans of freedom were being raised in the region. "If Mamata *didi* and Rahul Gandhi are afraid of Pakistan, let them be. But I declare that PoK belongs to India and we will take it back," he said addressing an election rally at Serampore in Hooghly district. The Home Minister said that the leaders of the Congress and Trinamool Congress were not in support of abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir and had said that "it will lead to bloodshed in the Valley".

NIA court grants conditional bail to Kashmiri journalist

A special National Investigation Agency (NIA) court has granted a conditional bail to journalist Asif Sultan in Srinagar and barred him from using encrypted messaging application or virtual private network on mobile phone and directed to notify police about his new mobile phone or SIM card. The court observed, "Having regard to the facts and circumstances of the case...i.e. the accused has been in the custody from the last 72 days, the fact that the recovery has been made from the place of occurrence and sent to the Forensic Science Laboratory and that most of investigation has been completed, the interest of justice will be served in case the applicant is admitted to bail, at this stage."

14 HCL officials rescued, one dead in Khetri mine accident

Fourteen officials of Hindustan Copper Limited (HCL) trapped inside a mine at Khetri in Rajasthan's Neem Ka Thana district were rescued on Wednesday, while one official died in the accident. All the officials were trapped in the Kolihan mine when the vertical shaft carrying them collapsed because of breakage of a rope on Tuesday night. The team of the public sector HCL comprised members of the Vigilance Department from Kolkata and other officials who were visiting the site for an inspection. The deceased has been identified as Upendra Pandey, Chief Vigilance Officer at HCL.

CUET-UG: over 75% of 11.4 lakh candidates appear on first day

Of the 11.4 lakh candidates scheduled to appear for Common University Entrance Test (CUET - UG) at 2,157 centres in 379 cities in an eight-day exercise, the attendance for the first day of the examinations was more than 75%, said a statement from the National Testing Agency (NTA), which is organising the exams. "The test was conducted for Chemistry, Biology, English, and General Tests all over India except 258 centres in Delhi," an official said. "This is a landmark achievement by the NTA in conducting CUET-UG in such large numbers on a single day," said M. Jagadesh Kumar, Chairman, UGC. The tests in four papers scheduled in 258 centres in Delhi on May 15 have been postponed to May 29.

Candidate switch unsettles Jaunpur

BSP replaced Srikala Reddy with sitting MP Shyam Singh Yadav, creating confusion among the voters; the move has resulted in allegations that the party is the BJP's 'B' team, amid speculation that Reddy, wife of the don-turned-politician Dhananjay Singh, will be joining the saffron party

GROUND REPORT

Nistula Hebbar
JAUNPUR

"It's not a joke to attempt vote transfer," says Shivlal Yadav, who has come to sell vegetables at Rakesh Kumar Agrahari's yard in Jaunpur's Shambhoganj Bazaar.

Mr. Yadav's remarks allude to what he believes is confusion among the voters of Uttar Pradesh's Jaunpur who had thought that Srikala Reddy's candidature from the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) had settled matters for them. As the wife of local mafia don-turned-politician Dhananjay Singh, Ms. Reddy was the instant favourite in the constituency, with her husband enjoying a Robin Hood-like image of derring-do and charity cutting across caste lines.

Jaunpur, currently held by the BSP, which won it in an alliance with the Samajwadi Party (SP) in 2019, was one seat where *samikaran* (equations of caste) did not mean much.

Poll battle: The BSP has renominated its sitting MP Shyam Singh Yadav, left, in Jaunpur withdrawing the nomination of Srikala Reddy. FACEBOOK/SHYAM SINGH YADAV/SHRIKALA DHANANJAY SINGH

Since then, the BSP has withdrawn Ms. Reddy's nomination and renominated its sitting MP, Shyam Singh Yadav, a move that has unsettled everyone. It has also resulted in barbs that the BSP is the BJP's 'B' team, speculation that Ms. Reddy will be joining the BJP herself very soon, and the prospect of BJP candidate Kripa Shankar Singh now becoming a "sure shot" winner.

According to estimates, Yadavs make up the biggest chunk of voters in Jaunpur at 2.5-2.75 lakh, with Scheduled Castes (SC) the next largest group at around 2.25 lakh votes. Muslims voters stand at 2.15 lakh, upper caste Kshatriyas and Brahmins at around 2.25 lakh, while Mauryas and Patels, non-Yadav Other Backward Classes (OBC), number a little over two lakh.

Ms. Reddy, with Mr. Dhananjay Singh's heft, commanded votes from all; not so the other candidates.

Mr. Shivlal Yadav now has to choose whether to vote for Mr. Shyam Singh Yadav because of individual caste loyalty, or the SP's Babu Singh Kushwaha because of the strong support base the party enjoys in the Yadav community. "Kushwaha's candidature is like a bone stuck in my throat," the vegetable grower says, but indicates that the party, and the loyalty of the larger community, trumps the surname.

He adds that the non-Yadav OBC group of Mauryas is also voting for the SP. Asked if he would vote for the BJP candidate, if Mr. Dhananjay Singh or Ms. Reddy join that party, Mr. Yadav responds with a clear 'no'. "People voting for Dhananjay Singh will not necessarily all transfer their votes to where he goes," he says emphatically.

This point is further emphasised in Idrispur village, largely occupied by those belonging to the Khatik and Vishwakarma Scheduled Caste communities, and while large parts of these communities have moved to the BJP in its salami slicing of the OBC and SC support bases of the SP and the BSP, in Jaunpur, the elephant symbol is still significant.

Bina Devi and her daughter-in-law Antima Devi acknowledge that they received funds to build a toilet in their home under the present government, but add that Ms. Reddy's withdrawal is "not a good thing". Choosing sides has become difficult. Ms. Bina Devi's husband says that the village *pradhan* or chief will be giving them the signal on where to go, closer to the polls. There is visible irritation over the fact that Ms. Reddy was made to withdraw her candidature.

BSP voters now have to weigh in on whether to vote for an unpopular candidate who will likely lose just to keep State and national party status alive for the BSP, or follow other imperatives.

While the men in another village with a large SC population, Shuklaamganj, say that they were yet to make up their minds over where to go, Sunita Devi and her mother-in-law Murti Devi quietly whisper that they will vote for the BJP. "We got some money for toilets and two people from our village have got gas connection," they said.

The *labharthiyon ki fauj* (army of beneficiaries) spoken of by BJP leaders has a distinctly feminine hue here.

The withdrawal of a candidate acceptable to all in Jaunpur has pushed caste fault lines into sharp relief in this eastern U.P. seat, where the battle of *samikaran* is at full play.

India records highest number of Internet shutdowns in 2023

Aroon Deep
NEW DELHI

The report says that Internet was snapped 116 times in the country last year

India witnessed the highest number of Internet shutdowns in the world in 2023, a record it has held for the sixth straight year, according to a report released on Wednesday.

The Internet was snapped 116 times in the country last year, the Keep It On coalition, a grouping of civil society bodies that advocates against Internet blockades, said.

Officials in India continue to impose Internet shutdown orders over communal tension, violence, exams, and other reasons. This has drawn condemnation from civil society in India and around the world, especially in Manipur, where footage documenting atrocities committed during the ethnic violence have gone viral several weeks after the incidents actually took place.

More of these shutdown orders are being applied regionally rather than locally.

The Internet was shut down across Punjab during the manhunt for pro-Khalistani preacher Amritpal Singh, and multiple times across Manipur during the ongoing ethnic violence in the State.

"The impacts [of the Internet shutdown in Manipur] were severe, particularly for women, as the shutdowns made it more difficult to document rampant atrocities, including murder, rape, arson, and other gender-based violence, and thereby hold perpetrators accountable," the report said.

With 37 orders, Myanmar recorded the second-highest number of Internet shutdowns, followed by Iran (34), Palestine (16), and Ukraine (8).

'Indian forces helping Kuki militants in Myanmar'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) on Wednesday accused the Indian security forces of helping the "Kuki militant groups" to wage war against the "Meitei revolutionary groups" in Myanmar.

The statement comes a day after *The Hindu* reported a chargesheet filed by the National Investigation Agency where the central agency alleged that the "China-Myanmar module" of NSCN-IM, the Naga outfit that signed a framework agreement with the Union government in 2015, helped two banned Meitei outfits to infiltrate Manipur to fuel ethnic violence and destabilise the State.

NSCN alleged that, "Indian Security Forces were extending logistics and material support to KNA(B) (Kuki National Army-Bangladesh) to wage war against the Meitei revolutionary groups."

Uttarakhand forest fire: court to examine State's approach

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday decided to examine if the Uttarakhand government had adopted a "lackadaisical" approach to dousing forest fires which took innocent lives and destroyed forest cover in the ecologically fragile Himalayan slopes.

A Bench headed by Justice B.R. Gavai has sought a response from the Uttarakhand Chief Secretary on the level of preparedness of the State in the face of forest fires, which have been a recurring phenomenon in recent years.

The issues highlighted in the hearing include the release of only a little over ₹3.1 crore by the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority for 2023-24 when the Centre had allotted ₹9.13 crore; the alleged diversion of forest officials and fire personnel for election work; vacancies in the Forest Department; measures taken to prevent the burning of pine needles; and efforts taken so far to release the State Disaster Management Fund.

An NDRF worker tries to control a fire that broke out in Pauri Garhwal district on Tuesday.

The court listed the case for detailed hearing on May 17. In the previous hearing, the court had snubbed the State government, saying rain gods or cloud-seeding would not douse the forest fires which claimed five lives.

The State had downplayed the forest blaze in court, assuring that the emergency was over. "We will surely examine if the emergency is over or not," Justice Gavai had replied.

PM's visit to Nashik: over 50 farmers detained

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Nashik, over 50 farmers and Opposition parties from the *Maha Vikas Aghadi* were detained in different police stations in Nashik. The onion producers and the Opposition had planned to stage a protest against the poor and unstructured decisions taken by the Central government regarding export prices over the last one year.

Farmers were detained since 7 a.m. in their respective tehsils and villages in Nashik district and were released only after 5 p.m.

There are around 3.5 lakh onion producing farmers registered with Maharashtra Rajya Kanda Utpadak Shetkari Sanghatana (Maharashtra State Onion Producers Association).

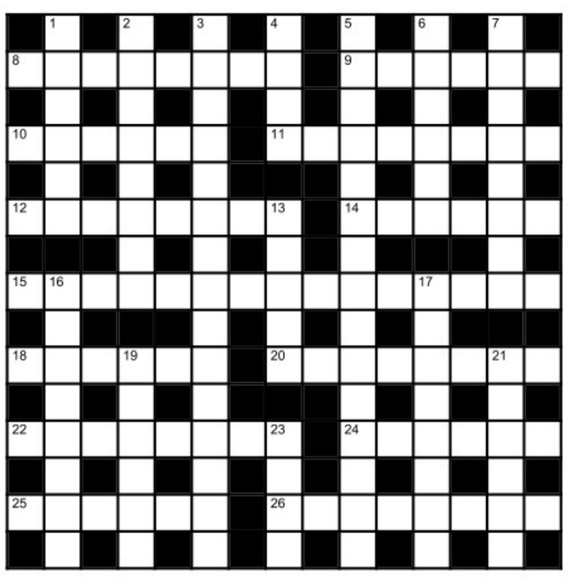
Onion farmers also said the local media did not cover their concerns when they were detained.

TH CROSSWORD + 14176

(set by Crescent)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

8 Old chaps come again to some empty resort (8)
9 Man facing a fellow in direct confrontation (4-2)
10 A cover, like over fruit (6)
11 Monk Penang discharged as fake in Malaysian villages (8)
12 Contact lines for every minister (8)
14 Selection of exotic liqueurs for exclusive group (6)
15 Police vault contains case of narcotics and drugs taken during seizures (15)
18 Stop moving decorative wall panel in delivery (6)
20 Mowing is extremely critical having made a change to yard (8)
22 A new leg, map out strategy (4,4)
24 Boldly face animal edging back to rear (6)
25 Liberal habits America leads in without exception (6)
26 Cobblers earlier spreading rounded piece of leather over foot (8)

Down

1 Remedy concerning couple (6)
2 High temperature apart, toxic atop volcano (8)
3 Explosion covering another, see crackers go (7,4,4)
4 Jolt for dolt (4)
5 As I say, my small choices lead to big bucks (8,7)
6 Spiritual enlightenment I register with sun rising (6)
7 Special gift to satisfy past wish (4,4)
13 With son in tow, cycling across ranges (5)
16 Pick of Nizam's flanks to join forces for the most part (8)
17 The least modelled jocks (8)
19 Always embodying Juliet, a bird (6)
21 Wise old man in fine story (6)
23 Inferior nut twisted with force (4)

SUDOKU

	7		6	2		1		
2			1					
8		4		7	9			
		3			2			1
	2						4	
6			7			9		
			9	8		6		4
					1			8
		1		6	5		3	

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

No.SS6160 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

Solution to previous puzzle

T	A	R	D	I	E	S	T	
R		H		C		E		
E	G	O	T	I	S	T	S	
P		M		N		T		C
A	M	B	I	G	U	I	T	Y
N		I				N		S
			T	A	N	G		T
M		P		S				
O	V	E	R	T	H	E		
R		N		E		M		I
E	L	D	E	R			I	N
O		U		I		T		C
V	A	L	I	S	E		T	H
E		U		K			E	
R	E	M	I	S	S		E	D

A	S	T	A	R	A	P	P	E	L
						P		R	A
I	S	T	S		U	P	R	O	A	R
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Y			A	M	I	N	O	
				F		A		
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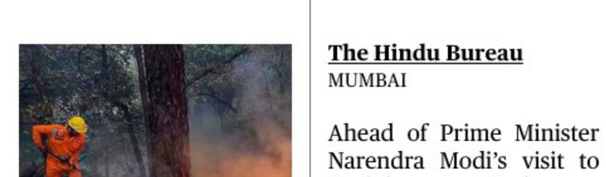
						C		S
			I	N	T	H	E	D	A	R	K
			T		C		R	S		U
			T	H	R	E	A	T	E	N
			E		C		R		K
			E	D	I	T	I	O	N	S

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

9	8	6	5	3	1	7	2	4
5	3	7	2	4	8	6	9	1
2	4	1	7	9	6	8	3	5
4	2	8	6	1	7	3	5	9
3	6	5	8	2	9	4	1	7
1	7	9	4	5	3	2	8	6
6	5	3	1	7	2	9	4	8
8	9	4	3	6	5	1	7	2
7	1	2	9	8	4	5	6	3



FAITH

The power of Durga

Ignorance and ego are the biggest setback to humanity and one should pray to Durga to help one see the light. Durga literally means fort, She is the one who keeps everyone safe. However, she is not very easy to attain, said Dr. Sudha Seshayyan in a discourse.

Emanating from the three Murtis as a force of light that results in Her formation, Durga is an embodiment of the power of all the worlds, created to fight Mahishasura. The asuras were always devout and were known for fervent tapas and prayer, and in fairness, God grants boons to them as being deserving. However, when they regress from the path of dharma, they are shown that boons are not a protection against sinning ways. A saint named Ramban prayed for a powerful, non-vanquishable son from the first woman he comes across and since the first form he espied was a buffalo, he was blessed with the buffalo-headed Mahisha. Mahishasura also performed severe penance and was granted the boon of not being killed by any man. Mahishasura thought women were inherently weaker and therefore not a threat to him. Hence Durga takes shape and vanquishes him. One should understand the symbolism of the buffalo head mentioned here and not read it in the literal sense. A buffalo is ignorant but carries itself with its head high, unaware of its limitation.

INBRIEF

TVS Motor Company begins operations in Italy

TVS Motor Company (TVSM) said it had started operations in Italy via its branch office TVS Motor Italia headed by Giovanni Notarbartolo di Furnari. The company said it would introduce a selection of advanced, high-quality thermic and electric scooters and motorcycles. "Italy's rich automotive culture and its embrace of cutting-edge transport solutions present a perfect backdrop for our product range," said Sharad Mohan Mishra, President, Head Group Strategy.

Aadhar Housing Finance gains 4.85% on day of listing

Aadhar Housing Finance Ltd., on the day of its listing on Wednesday, gained 4.62% from the issue price of ₹315 and 4.85% from the listing price of ₹314.30 to close at ₹329.55 per share on the BSE. During the day, the stock touched an intra-day high of ₹343.20 and a low of ₹293.35. As per stock exchange data, the full market cap is estimated at ₹14,055.92 crore. The ₹3,000-crore initial public offering (IPO) of the lender was subscribed 26.76 times.

Fashion solutions firm PDS's revenue dips 2% to ₹10,373 cr.

Global fashion-solution provider PDS Ltd. reported revenue from operations dipped 2% in FY24 to ₹10,373 crore. Gross profit for the year climbed 19% to ₹2,111 crore in FY24. However, profit after tax plunged 32%. A press release from the company said revenue from operations rose from ₹2,742 crore in the third quarter of FY24 to ₹3,215 crore in the last quarter of the year. Despite facing headwinds, the core business remained resilient, the company said.

LIC rises 6% as SEBI sets May 2027 to meet holding norms

Government gets a breather as it currently owns 96.5% of the state-owned life insurer; LIC listed on May 17, 2022, and was required to achieve 10% public shareholding within two years of listing

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

State-owned Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) said the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) had granted it an additional three years time to comply with the public shareholding norms, an announcement that saw the insurer's shares vault more than 6% on Wednesday.

"The revised timeline... to achieve 10% public shareholding is on or before May 16, 2027," the insurer said in a filing.

Dual advantage: SEBI's decision also provides relief to investors wary of a bigger public float. REUTERS

SEBI's decision, which effectively affords the government more time to decide on the next tranche of divestment in the insurer, also provides relief to investors wary of a bigger public float. The government of India currently owns 96.5% of the insurer.

SEBI's May 14 communication grants additional time of three years to achieve 10% public shareholding within a period of 5 years from the date of listing, LIC said.

The decision follows the Department of Economic Affairs move in December to grant a one-time 'public interest' exemption to LIC to meet 25% public shareholding within 10 years.

LIC shares closed 6.31% higher on the BSE at ₹989.80 on Wednesday.

The insurer had got listed on the bourses on May 17, 2022.

India agrees with Australia to share key import data

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

In a bid to accelerate bilateral talks for a comprehensive free trade deal, India and Australia have agreed to exchange monthly data on preferential imports under the interim trade pact that came into force in late December 2022, even as negotiations for a trade deal with the U.K. are now at an advanced stage.

An agreement to share import data between India and Australia, the first such arrangement under India's free trade agreements (FTAs) so far, was reached late last month, Commerce Ministry officials said. While the two sides are in the midst of negotiations for a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA), India's exports to Australia rose 14% in financial year 2023-24 to almost $8 billion.

On the U.S. government's decision to hike tariffs on a slew of imports from China, including electric vehicles (EVs), EV batteries, semiconductors and solar cells and medical equipment, officials said it would be speculative to assume that this would result in such goods being dumped in India.

"We don't see any need to worry and we already have an institutional anti-dumping mechanism in place to deal with such eventualities," a senior official said, stressing that all countries, including the U.S., are looking to reduce their dependence on China for important sectors.

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	WEDNESDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	72,987	-0.16
US Dollar	83.46	0.05
Gold	73,400	0.61
Brent oil	82.62	0.18

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	3049.75	12.20
Adani Ports	1337.85	6.60
Apollo Hosp	5848.80	-14.00
Asian Paints	2813.70	-52.45
Axis Bank	1128.05	5.20
Bajaj Auto	8903.15	-162.10
Bajaj Finserv	1569.05	-7.40
Bajaj Finance	6680.00	4.30
Bharti Airtel	1309.90	25.60
BPCL	625.05	19.10
Britannia Ind	5064.00	-76.80
Cipla	1406.70	49.35
Coal India	467.85	19.15
Divis Lab	3892.55	-3.65
Dr Reddys Lab	5875.00	6.20
Eicher Motors	4649.35	-81.20
Grasim Ind	2369.70	-2.35
HCL Tech	1332.90	11.85
HDFC Bank	1438.50	-22.45
HDFC Life	555.95	-5.60
Hero MotoCorp	5057.30	13.85
Hindalco	653.70	7.05
Hind Unilever	2323.30	-26.30
ICICI Bank	1124.35	3.80
IndusInd Bank	1417.10	-3.90
Infosys	1419.95	-4.75
ITC	427.80	-1.90
JSW Steel	870.95	-10.55
Kotak Bank	1650.80	4.50
L&T	3411.30	31.85
LTIMindtree Ltd.	4649.30	14.45
M&M	2302.30	32.40
Maruti Suzuki	12767.30	-46.90
NestleIndia	2465.00	-22.35
NTPC	361.35	5.55
ONGC	273.45	0.55
PowerGrid Corp	314.85	5.60
Reliance Ind	2832.55	-7.60
SBI Life	1430.10	-2.75
State Bank	820.30	2.10
Shriram Finance Ltd.	2320.00	-10.35
Sun Pharma	1527.40	-17.85
TataConsumerProduct	1068.90	-16.55
Tata Motors	947.30	-17.35
Tata Steel	165.60	0.65
TCS	3880.40	-20.80
Tech Mahindra	1274.50	-1.00
Titan	3268.55	-20.35
UltraTech Cement	9614.10	-46.55
Wipro	458.30	1.95

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on May 15

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	83.30	83.62
Euro	90.20	90.55
British Pound	105.14	105.55
Japanese Yen (100)	53.47	53.67
Chinese Yuan	11.53	11.58
Swiss Franc	92.04	92.40
Singapore Dollar	61.74	61.99
Canadian Dollar	61.12	61.35
Malaysian Ringitt	17.70	17.78
Australian Dollar	55.35	55.56

Source:Indian Bank

NHAI says ₹3,000 cr. insurance surety bonds issued so far

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

Insurance firms act as 'surety' and provide guarantee that the contractor will fulfil obligations

Insurance firms issued 700 insurance surety bonds valued about ₹3,000 crore after Centre made such instruments on par with bank guarantees for all government procurement.

Details were shared by officials at a workshop on implementation of insurance surety bonds in national highway contracts, organised by the National Highways Authority of India in New Delhi.

Insurance surety bonds are financial instruments where insurance firms act as 'surety' and provide guarantee the contractor will fulfil obligations per agreed terms. Contractors are being urged to utilise the bonds as added security while submitting bids.

CIL, NMDC, OVL to scout for critical mineral assets abroad

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The government on Wednesday said public sector companies Coal India, NMDC and ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL) would start looking actively for critical mineral assets overseas.

"A group of secretaries (on resources) has decided that these companies move forward and look at critical mineral assets abroad also," Mines Secretary V.L. Kantha Rao told reporters here.

Coal India, he said, is actively pursuing some lithium blocks in Chile.

"So, Coal India is getting active... NMDC is already active in Australia. They have some gold mines in Australia and are also looking at lithium mines in Australia," Mr. Rao explained.

Granules Q4 net profit rises 8% to ₹129.64 crore

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

Drugmaker Granules India reported consolidated net profit for the fourth quarter ended March increased 8% year-on-year to ₹129.64 crore (₹119.60 crore) even as revenue from operations dipped 2%.

Decline in sales volume of paracetamol active pharmaceutical ingredient (API), coupled with price erosion, dragged down revenue from operations to ₹1,175.77 crore (₹1,195.5 crore).

The company has declared a final dividend of ₹1.50 per share (face value of ₹1) each for 2023-24.

PFC Q4 PAT grows 20% to ₹5,624 crore

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Parminder Chopra

Power Finance Corporation Ltd. (PFC) reported consolidated fourth quarter net profit grew 20% to ₹5,624.36 crore from ₹4,676.71 crore in the year earlier period owing to 22% year-on-year (YoY) increase in interest income at ₹23,891.19 crore.

During Q4 FY24, the company's revenue from operations rose 20% to ₹24,141.40 crore YoY.

For FY24 PFC reported net profit of ₹19,761.16 crore, up 24% from ₹15,889.33 crore in FY23.

Interest income for the year grew 18% YoY to ₹90,085.40 crore.

Revenue from operation increased 15% YoY to ₹91,096.72 crore.

Parminder Chopra, CMD, PFC said "PFC Group continues to be the largest NBFC in India and is also India's highest profit making NBFC ...this strong performance is backed by a 14% growth in our loan portfolio."

PFC's renewable loan portfolio grew 25% YoY to more than ₹60,000 crore.

Razorpay lets staff insure siblings, cover HIV and PCOS

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Payments firm Razorpay has announced a new employee health insurance policy that will allow staff to include siblings in addition to live-in partners, LGBTQIA+ partners and parents. It also extended coverage to include critical treatments for HIV/AIDS.

Employees could define their own families, encompassing live-in or LGBTQIA+ partners as spouses, and even siblings, Razorpay said in a statement on its new policy. It also provides coverage for Poly Cystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS).

TVS Motor to unveil ICE, EV products: CEO

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

K. N. Radhakrishnan

TVS Motor Co. Ltd. (TVSM) will introduce new products both in the internal combustion engine (ICE) and electric-vehicle (EV) segments this year, CEO K. N. Radhakrishnan said.

"These are fairly in the advanced stages," he said during a call with analysts.

The segment share of scooters will rise as it had an 'exponential' advantage leading to an expansion in this category in ICE and EV segments. Scooter category in the industry will expand from 30%, 32% to 35% or 40% in the next five years as it provides a great opportunity to grow ICEs as well as EVs.

Stating they were constantly looking at 'white spaces,' he said 2024-25 will be a 'very, very exciting year.'

"Depending upon usage, some will prefer EVs, some people will prefer the ICE. So, we should be investing in both and making sure we capture this opportunity on both EVs and ICEs," he added.

He said FY25 capex will be about ₹1,000 crore for both ICEs and EVs.

Rane Holdings turns Q4 net of ₹38 crore, to pay ₹25 dividend

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Rane Holdings Ltd. (RHL) has posted a consolidated net profit of ₹38 crore for the quarter ended March against a loss of ₹8 crore in the year-earlier period due to strong growth driven by demand from the two-wheeler and passenger vehicle segments.

Revenue from operations contracted 7% to ₹870 crore, the holding company of Rane Group said in a statement.

Sales to original equipment customers rose by 5%, while sales to aftermarket customers grew by 6%. Export sales decreased by 14% predominantly on account of the divestment of Rane Light Metal Casting Inc.'s business.

Appointments

On Wednesday, the board approved the appointment of Carborundum Universal Ltd. Chairman M.M. Murugappan as independent director for a period of five years from August 2. It also approved the appointment of Rane Brake CFO J. Ananth as RHL's CFO in the place of M.A.P. Sridhar Kumar due to intra-group company transfer from July 1. The board recommended a dividend of ₹25 per share to be paid by August 12.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform to the general Public that, our client has lost/misplaced the Original Allotment Letter issued by the Bangalore Development Authority dated: 29/04/2009, No. BDA:UKA-1:1439:C:HSR-7:09-10, with respect to the Site No. 1439/C, in the Layout formed by the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA), situated at 7th Sector, HSR Layout, Bangalore, Measuring East to West: 15.00 Meters and North to South: 24.30 Meters, in all measuring 364.50 Square Meters, Our client has lodged the Police Complaint in Bagalkot, (The Karnataka State Police) dated: 14/03/2024, vide E-Lost Report No. 0974081/2024. Any person/s having or claiming any manner of right, title & Interest over the above said property or on the above mentioned original document may intimate the same in writing to the under signed along with documentary evidence in support of their claims **within 07 days** from the date of this publication, failing which, it will presumed that the above mentioned original document is lost and our client and his successors in interest or any other person/s claming under him are free to deal with above said property as if no valid claims are subsisting against above said property.

It is hereby informed that, the General Public are restrained from transacting with the above said land except our client and his successor-in-interest., If any person holding the above mentioned document may kindly contact the undersigned at the earliest.

Dated this 16th day of May 2024 at Bangalore

M/S. LEGAL NEXUS,
ADVOCATES & CONSULTANTS,
No. 428, 1st Floor, 25th Cross, 24th Main,
Sector- 2, HSR Layout, Bangalore – 560 102.
Phone: 080-65555914
Mobile: 9945688974, 9980910789

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that our client intends to purchase the Schedule Property from its present owner Sri. Ashok Kumar Thathagari S/o. Sri. T. Devendra Reddy.

Any person/s having any claim, right, title or interest over the schedule property or any objections to the proposed purchase, may file their objections in writing along with copies of supporting documents to the undersigned within 14 days from the date of this publication, failing which our client will be advised to go ahead and complete the sale formalities.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the residential PLOT No. B-9, Secotor-3, formed in converted Survey No. 27/1, of Junnasandra Village, BBMP Khata No. 715/696/B9, situated at "GREEN VILLE" Layout, Junnasandra Village, VarthurHobli, Bangalore East Taluk, measuring East to West 80 Feet and North to South 50 Feet in all measuring 4000 Sq. Feet and bounded as follows;

East: Road; **West:** Property bearing Plot No. B-03; **North:** Property bearing Plot No. B-06; **South:** Property bearing Plot No. B-13;

Sd/- **Akhila & Associates, Advocates**
No.83, 1st Floor, Cropexium Building, LRDE Layout, Service Road, Karthik Nagar, Doddanekkundi, Marathahalli, Bangalore-560037.
Ph. 9741300393

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Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Private Limited
5th Floor, Plot No. 137, Sector- 44 I Gurgaon- 122002 Ph: 0124 - 4527200

Appendix IV (See Rule 8 (1)
POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property)

Whereas,

The Authorised Officer of **The Vishweshwar Sahakari Bank Ltd**, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (**'SARFAESI Act'**), and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) of the SARFAESI Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 (**'Rules'**), issued a Demand Notice (Ref No.01/REC/AO/L-13125/2012-13) dated **06.02.2013** calling upon the borrower and guarantor **1) Mr. Bharat Bashetti Kurbetti (Borrower) and 2) Mr. Suresh Rajaram Wagale (Guarantor)** to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being **Rs.46,57,506.00 (Rupees Forty Six Lakhs Fifty Seven Thousand Five Hundred and Six only) as on 31.01.2013** together with future interest and costs from **01-02-2013** till date of repayment within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

And whereas, the Financial Assets with respect to the loan(s) availed by said borrower and guarantor from The Vishweshwar Sahakari Bank Ltd. have since been acquired by **Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Pvt. Ltd.** under Section 5 of the SARFAESI Act vide Assignment Agreement dated 20.02.2019 thereby acquiring all rights, titles and interests of **The Vishweshwar Sahakari Bank Ltd** therein including underlying securities

The borrower/guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given by the Authorised Officer of **Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Pvt. Ltd.** to the borrower/guarantor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on me under Section 13(4) of the SARFAESI Act read with Rule 8 of the Rules on this **11th day of May 2024.**

The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Pvt. Ltd. for an amount of Rs.2,49,65,888/- (Rupees Two Crore Forty Nine Lakh Sixty Five Thousand Eight Hundred Eighty Eight Only) as on 17.11.2023 together with future interest and costs from 18.11.2023.

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the SARFAESI Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

MORTGAGED ASSETS : DESCRIPTION OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES
(A/c. No.2219/278)
House property at C.T.S, No 3650/43, Shintre Colony, Nipani Tal Chikodi, Dist Belgaum area admeasuring 214.60 Sq.mt
Boundaries : North : Road **South : Plot No.45**
East : Road **West : Plot No.42**

Place: Nipani
Date:11.05.2024
(Authorized Officer)
Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Pvt. Ltd.

Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Private Limited
5th Floor, Plot No. 137, Sector- 44 I Gurgaon- 122002 Ph: 0124 - 4527200

Appendix IV (See Rule 8 (1)
POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property)

Whereas,

The Authorised Officer of **The Vishweshwar Sahakari Bank Ltd**, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (SARFAESI Act, 2002), and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) of the SARFAESI Act, 2002 read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 (Rules), issued a Demand Notice dated 10.05.2018 calling upon the borrower and guarantors **1) M/s. Govind Textiles** through Partners (Borrower), **2) Shri Manavi Shantanu Shamrao** (Partner & Guarantor) **3) Sou Manavi Sharayu Shantanu** (Partner & Guarantor), **4) Smt. Athani Shilpa Ashok** (Partner & Guarantor), **5) Sou Khavare Jyoti Sandeep** (Partner & Guarantor), **6) Shri Gadiwaddar Ganapathi Ramachandra** (Guarantor), **7) Shri Dabhole Pralhad Ganpati** (Guarantor), **8) Smt. Manavi Sunita Shamrao** (Guarantor), & **9) Kum. Naregal Bharati Shankar** (Guarantor) to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being **Rs.1,14,04,670.00 (Rupees One Crore Fourteen Lakhs Four Thousand Six Hundred and Seventy only) as on 30.04.2018** together with future interest and costs from **01.05.2018 till date of repayment within 60 days** from the date of receipt of the said notice.

And whereas, the Financial Asset with respect to the loan(s) availed by said borrower and guarantor/s from The Vishweshwar Sahakari Bank Ltd ha since been acquired by Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Pvt. Ltd. under Section 5 of the SARFAESI Act, 2002 vide Assignment Agreement dated 20.02.2019 thereby acquiring all rights, titles and interest of The Vishweshwar Sahakari Bank Ltd. therein.

The borrower/guarantors having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given by the Authorised Officer of Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Pvt. Ltd. to the borrower/guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on me under Section 13(4) of the SARFAESI Act, 2002 read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, on this **11th day of May 2024.**

The borrower/guarantors in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Pvt. Ltd. for an amount of **Rs.1,71,28,143 /- (Rupees One Crore Seventy One Lakhs Twenty Eight Thousand One Hundred and Forty Three Only) as on 03-11-2023** together with future interest and cost from **04.11.2023.**

The borrower/guarantors attention is invited to the provisions of sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the SARFAESI Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Description of the Immovable Property

(2206/34 & 2206/36 & 2206/57)
Property No. 1: All that piece and parcel of Plot No.67 out of R.S. No.260/A1, Corresponding to VPC No.1269 admeasuring about 12750 sq.ft. along with construction upon it, The Nilpani Co-Op. Industrial Estate Limited, Village Jatrat, Tal Chikodi, Dist. Belgaum. Total Land Area 12750 Sq.ft. + Construction thereon along with Semi Central Humidified Plant Unit & 63 KVA Transformer Center/20 HP MP.
Plot No.67 bounded as follows:
To East: Road
To West: Plot No.108 & 109
To South: Plot No.68
To North: Plot No.66
Property No.2: All that piece and parcel of NARS No.203/B measuring 1A-20gs situated within the town of Nilpani, Tal Chikodi, Dist. Belgaum
Boundaries
To East: Road
To West: Road
To South: Road
To North: Property of Shantanu Manavi

Place: Nipani
Date:11.05.2024
Padmakumar S
(Authorized Officer)
Encore Asset Reconstruction Company Pvt. Ltd.

BEIRUT

Hezbollah says it struck Israel following field commander's killing

AFP

Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah group said it launched dozens of rockets at north Israel military positions on Wednesday in retaliation for the killing of a member Israel said was a field commander. Israel and Hamas ally Hezbollah have exchanged near-daily fire since the start of the Gaza war. AFP.

BANGKOK

Myanmar air strike on health centre injures around 20 persons

AFP

A Myanmar military air strike on a medical clinic wounded around 20 persons in western Rakhine state, according to an ethnic armed group and local media on Wednesday. Clashes have rocked Rakhine since the Arakan Army (AA) attacked security forces in November, ending a ceasefire that had held since a military coup in 2021. AFP

ISLAMABAD

Former Pakistan PM Imran Khan gets bail in land corruption cases

REUTERS

Former Pakistan PM Imran Khan was granted bail in Islamabad on Wednesday on land corruption charges but will have to stay in jail to serve time in two other cases. Mr. Khan was indicted on charges that he and his wife were gifted land by a real estate developer when he was PM in exchange for illegal favours. REUTERS

BANGKOK

Thailand PM promises probe after striking activist dies in detention

AP

Thailand's prime minister on Wednesday offered his condolences to the family of a young activist who died in detention after a months-long hunger strike. Netiporn "Bung" Sanesangkhom, 28, died on Tuesday after suffering cardiac arrest while she was being detained on charges that included defaming the monarchy. AP

Slovakia PM shot multiple times, suffers life-threatening wounds

Police detain attacker after the assassination attempt following a government meeting in Handlova; the four-time Prime Minister and political veteran has been criticised for swaying his country's foreign policy in favour of the Kremlin

Agence France-Presse
BRATISLAVA

Slovakia's Prime Minister Robert Fico was battling life-threatening wounds on Wednesday after officials said he was shot multiple times in an assassination attempt condemned by European leaders.

The *Dennik N* daily said its reporter in the central town of Handlova heard several shots fired and then saw security guards rushing to lift the premier off the ground and into a car.

Outgoing Slovak President Zuzana Caputova told reporters that "the police have detained the attacker".

Out of the blue: Rescue workers wheel Robert Fico to a hospital in Banska Bystrica in central Slovakia on Wednesday. AP

"Today, after the government meeting in Handlova, there was an assassination attempt" on Mr. Fico, the government said in a post on social media. "He is currently being transported by helicopter to Banska Bystrica in a life-threatening condition, because it would take too long to get to Bratislava due to the necessity of an acute intervention," the government's statement added.

Anti-Ukraine stance

Mr. Fico, whose Smer-SD party won the general election last September, is a four-time Prime Minister and a political veteran criticised for swaying his country's foreign policy in favour of the Kremlin.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy condemned the "appalling" shooting and wished Mr. Fico a speedy recovery.

Since he assumed office last October, Mr. Fico has made a string of remarks that have soured ties between Slovakia and neighbouring Ukraine.

He has notably questioned Ukraine's sovereignty and called for a compromise with Russia, which invaded in 2022. After he was elected, Slovakia stopped sending weapons to Ukraine.

He also sparked mass protests with controversial changes, including a media law that critics say will undermine the impartiality of public television and radio.

Assange's wife, supporters, decry politics behind the WikiLeaks founder's case

Sriram Lakshman
LONDON

Days before a U.K. High Court hearing on whether WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange will be allowed to appeal his extradition to the United States, his wife, Stella, and other supporters decried the role politics had played in the case.

Mr. Assange, 52, is being charged on 18 counts, 17 of which involve the violation of the U.S.'s Espionage Act for publishing sensitive diplomatic and military cables. He faces up to 175 years in prison.

"Julian is just one decision away from being extradited," Stella Assange told reporters at a briefing organised by the Foreign Press Association on Wednesday. It was "bizzare", Ms. Assange said, that the U.S. had been allowed multiple opportunities to amend its case. "It seems like they are given endless chances to change their case," she said.

"The case is rigged against Julian," WikiLeaks editor in chief Kristinn Hrafnsson said, adding that Mr. Assange was a "political prisoner".

Noble cause: Wikileaks editor-in-chief Kristinn Hrafnsson and Stella Assange during a media briefing in London on Wednesday. AP

Assurances from U.S.

In March, the High Court had said Mr. Assange would be allowed to appeal his extradition if the U.S. failed to provide assurances that he would not face the death penalty and that Mr. Assange, an Australian (i.e., a non-U.S. citizen), could rely on the U.S.'s First Amendment (i.e., free speech) rights during his defence.

In April, it was reported that the U.S. had provided an assurance that the death penalty will not be sought or imposed in Mr. Assange's case.

Central concern

The U.S. also said Mr. Assange "will have the ability to raise and seek to rely upon" the First Amendment, but whether those rights applied to him as an Australian would be entirely a matter for U.S. courts to decide. This has been a central concern for Mr. Assange's lawyers.

"That is a non-assurance, it does not provide any assurance whatsoever," Jennifer Robinson, part of Mr. Assange's legal team, told reporters on Wednesday.

Ms. Robinson, who addressed journalists virtually from Australia, said there was case law in the U.S. which said foreign nationals cannot rely on First Amendment protections for acts committed outside the U.S.

"The court should not accept these diplomatic notes [U.S. assurances] because it does not respond to the assurances that they were seeking," Ms. Assange said.

The Australian parliament and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese have called for charges to be dropped against Mr. Assange and for him to be allowed to return to Australia.

Mr. Biden said in April that his administration was "considering" the request.

'Decisive' impact

On Wednesday, Ms. Assange said the Australian government's request was "crucial" and could have a "decisive" impact on the case.

Asked if a change in the U.K. government following the elections could change the outcome for Mr. Assange, Ms Assange appeared to imply it could. "It's all politics in this case," she said.

Mr. Assange, who has been held at London's Belmarsh Prison since 2019, is expected to appear at his hearing on Monday. If the court rules against him, he could appeal to the European Court of Human Rights.

End Rafah military action 'immediately', EU's Borrell tells Israel

Agence France-Presse
BRUSSELS

The European Union on Wednesday urged Israel to end its military operation in Gaza's Rafah "immediately", warning that failure to do so would undermine ties with the bloc.

"Should Israel continue its military operation in Rafah, it would inevitably put a heavy strain on the EU's relationship with Israel," said the statement issued in the EU's name by its foreign policy chief Josep Borrell.

Josep Borrell

"While the EU recognises Israel's right to defend itself, Israel must do so in line with International Humanitarian Law," it said. The law requires Israel to allow in humanitarian aid, the statement stressed.

The EU also condemned a Hamas attack on the Kerem Shalom border crossing which blocked humanitarian relief supplies.

Ukrainian troops pull out of some areas while Zelenskyy postpones his foreign trips

Associated Press
KYIV

Visiting U.S. Secretary of State Blinken has promised $2 billion-worth weapons to Ukraine

Ukrainian forces withdrew from some parts of the country's northeast and battled Russian troops in other areas on Wednesday, as President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's decision to postpone all his upcoming foreign trips underscored the seriousness of the threat his soldiers are facing.

Against that grim backdrop, visiting U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken sought to reassure Ukraine of continuing American support, announcing a $2 billion arms deal. Most of the money comes from a package approved last month.

The top diplomat's trip comes as Russian troops press a new offensive in Ukraine's Kharkiv region. It began last week, marking the most significant border incursion since the full-scale invasion began in 2022 and forcing thousands to flee their homes. In recent weeks, Moscow's forces have also sought to build on gains in the eastern region of Donetsk. Taken together, the developments mean the war has entered a critical stage for Ukraine's depleted army.

Ukraine's General Staff reported late on Tuesday that troops fell back from two areas in Kharkiv – Lukyantsi and Vovchansk – "in order to save the lives of our servicemen and avoid losses." Russia said it had captured Lukyantsi.

It was not possible to independently verify either side's claims.

India-gifted ambulance service in Sri Lanka in need of support

Meera Srinivasan
COLOMBO

An India-gifted free ambulance service in Sri Lanka, providing vital pre-hospital emergency care across the island for eight years, appears to be in need of critical support, going by a recent social media post by a public health professional.

Yasuni Manikkage, a doctor working at a Colombo-based government hospital, on Tuesday took to 'X' to flag a 51-year-old man's sudden death at his residence in Colombo. "Desperately called Suwaseriya, but they did not have any available ambulances nearby. We could not save him on time. Why is funding Suwaseriya 1990 & saving lives not a priority for Lankan government?" she asked in the post that has since drawn much attention.

Vital role: The ambulance network has attended to about 82 lakh calls and 19 lakh medical emergencies till date. FILE PHOTO

The delay in response time – the nearest ambulance was 30 minutes away – is uncharacteristic of the 'Suwaseriya 1990' service. From the time it was launched in July 2016, with a $7.56-million Indian grant, and expanded in two years with an additional $15.09 million from India, it has made a mark with its promptness and efficiency. Arguably New Delhi's most popular project in Sri Lanka, the ambulance network has attended to about 82 lakh calls and 19 lakh medical emergencies till date, including in remote areas.

After the initial Indian grant assistance to set up the service, Sri Lanka took over and has since been running it with a team of professionals working in coordination with the Ministry of Health. Over 700 of the medical technicians were trained in India initially, but following the pandemic years Sri Lanka developed its own training programme at the University of Kelaniya.

Sustenance challenge

Despite the service's reach and wide acclaim – a World Bank report called it one of the world's most digitally advanced and free ambulance services – sustaining it is proving a challenge after Sri Lanka's crushing financial meltdown in 2022, according to Dumindra Ratnayaka, chairman of the Suwaseriya Foundation.

The island nation's unprecedented economic crisis brought with it hyperinflation and a drastic rise in living costs, pushing many Sri Lankans, including thousands of medical professionals and technicians, to seek opportunities abroad. Consequently, Sri Lanka's public health system, and the ambulance service that is part of it, are impacted. "Of our nearly 1,500 staff, we have lost 400 since 2022," Mr. Ratnayaka said, speaking of the difficulty in finding technicians and putting them through training before they can come on board. Staff salaries are currently in the range of LKR 50,000 (roughly ₹13,800), with which an individual, let alone a family, can hardly make ends meet in Sri Lanka.

The government cannot increase salaries for just one section of public service, and it cannot afford salary hikes across the board at the moment, Sri Lanka's Health Minister Ramesh Pathirana said. "We have made the necessary budgetary allocation for the ambulance service. The country is stabilising, and things are improving in the health sector too," he told *The Hindu*.

Despite the budgetary allocation, an apparent funding crunch prompted the ambulance service to seek adoption last year. Through private sector donations and corporate assistance, it has raised LKR 750 million since, but sustaining the service may need more than individual philanthropy, public health experts noted.

Of the ambulance service's fleet of 322 vehicles, over 50 are currently offline owing to either staff shortages, or a delay in repairs. "Dimo, who are Tata's agent here, have also lost many mechanics, they have migrated. That means the time taken to repair a vehicle has increased considerably," Mr. Ratnayaka said, pointing to how the country's enduring crisis manifests in many ways.

LOOK OUT NOTICE

Sri. Akhil, S/o Harilal, Age-29, Palackalveli House, Muhamma PO, Thanneermukkam Village, Muhamma P/W-16, Alappuzha District who is the accused in Cr. 18/24,31/24,89/24, U/s 406, 420, 34 IPC of Pulinkunnu Police Station, Alappuzha. He is absconding after the commission of the crime. If any information about him, inform the below mentioned phone numbers.

Inspector of Police, Pulimkunnu PS : 9497980288
DySP, Ambalapuzha : 9497940865
District Police Chief, Alappuzha : 9497996982

196/F2/2024/I&PRD

राजस्थान स्टेट गंगानगर सुगर मिल्स लिमिटेड
निविदा क्र./विक्रय 24-24/23एफ, शुगर फैक्ट्री/509 — नीलामी सूचना — दिनांक :- 09/05/2024

S. No.	कार्य / वस्तु क्रय	नीलामी का आमंत्रण	नीलामी प्रस्तुत करने की प्रक्रिया	UBN No.	नीलामी की तिथी
1.	Sale of Sugar Auction Chart Yearly 2024-2025	सक्षम बोलीदाता	ऑनलाईन	GSM2425GLOE00005	संलग्न चार्ट अनुसार

नीलामी सूचना का विस्तृत वर्णन www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in पर देखा जा सकता है। इच्छुक बोलीदाता को निर्धारित दिनांक व समय से पूर्व अपनी धरोहर राशि एनईएमएल को जमा करवानी होगी, यदि बोली के संबंध में कुछ परिवर्तन / संशोधन किया जाता है तो वो भी उपरोक्त वर्णित साइट पर अपलोड किया जावेगा। इच्छुक बोलीदाताओं से अनुरोध है कि वे समय समय पर उक्त साइट से अपडेट होते रहे।
राज.संवाद/सी/24/122 — महाप्रबंधक

KSEB KERALA STATE ELECTRICITY BOARD LIMITED - Tender Notice
O/o the Deputy Chief Engineer, Electrical Circle, Perumbavoor, Ernakulam
E-tender ID: 2024_KSEB_672712_1 PAC: 4,91,60,200/-, Last Date - 27.05.2024, 03.00pm
E-tender ID: 2024_KSEB_672710_1 PAC: 5,74,86,400/-, Last Date - 27.05.2024, 03.00pm
E-tender ID: 2024_KSEB_672694_1 PAC: 4,08,36,000/-, Last Date - 27.05.2024, 03.00pm
O/o the Executive Engineer, Transmission Division, Mavelikara, Alappuzha
E-tender ID: 2023_KSEB_636741_2 PAC: 2,11,41,591/-, Last Date - 27.05.2024, 05.00PM
O/o the Deputy Chief Engineer, Electrical Circle, Nilambur, Malappuram
E-tender ID: 2024_KSEB_672610_1 PAC: 14,73,59,266/-, Last Date - 28.05.2024, 04.00pm
E-tender ID: 2024_KSEB_672611_1 PAC: 18,45,64,982/-, Last Date - 28.05.2024, 04.00pm
Visit www.etenders.kerala.gov.in and www.kseb.in Ref : PR/MC1/E490/E-tender/2024

JUST STARTING

Future bright for young Fraser-McGurk, says Ganguly

R.V. MOORTHY

Jake Fraser-McGurk has a long career ahead despite missing out on a T20 World Cup berth, said Sourav Ganguly. "With Ricky around, he guided Jake very well. He's just 22 and has got a long career. I know he missed out on the World Cup, Australia should have probably picked him," Ganguly said.

RISING TO THE OCCASION

Porel grabbed his opportunity with both hands: DC's Amre

R.V. MOORTHY

DC assistant coach Pravin Amre lauded Abishek Porel's knock against LSG. "What an innings he played. We saw Jake [Fraser-McGurk] getting out in the first over and even then, we managed to get 73 runs in the PowerPlay... Porel grabbed his opportunity with both hands," Amre said.

BANG BANG

IPL 2024 breaches record for most maximums in a season

R.V. MOORTHY

The 17th edition of the IPL has witnessed the highest number of sixes in a single edition of the cash-rich league. The 20 maximums in the DC-LSG clash on Tuesday took the overall tally in the 2024 edition to 1,125. The total in 2023 was 1,124; the 2022 edition completes the list with 1,062 sixes.

MISSING OUT

Injured Rabada returns home from Indian Premier League

K. MURALI KUMAR

South Africa pace spearhead Kagiso Rabada has returned home from the IPL due to a lower limb soft tissue infection, the country's cricket board said on Wednesday. CSA also said that the injury is unlikely to impact Rabada's preparation for the T20 World Cup in the Americas next month.

Curran & Co. dent Rajasthan Royals' top-two prospects

The Punjab Kings skipper's all-round show helps the side down Samson's men by five wickets; local boy Parag's 34-ball 48 to take the home team to 144 for nine proves insufficient

IPL-17

Santadeep Dey
GUWAHATI

When Sam Curran said 'we can spoil a few campaigns now' at the toss on Wednesday, it wasn't in jest.

The skipper of the already-eliminated Punjab Kings showed he meant business as his side beat Rajasthan Royals by five wickets, extending Sanju Samson & Co.'s wait to confirm a top-two finish in IPL 2024.

Leading by example, Curran played a match-winning hand at the Barsapara Stadium here, scoring an unbeaten 41-ball 63 after picking two wickets to help PBKS' efforts to avoid the wooden spoon.

In response to RR's 144 for nine, the visitor got off to a confident start despite losing Prabhsimran Singh early.

But with Rilee Rossouw and Shashank Singh's wickets in the fifth over, Avesh Khan injected belief into the crowd.

PBKS, which was at 35 for one at the end of four overs, was reduced to 39 for three after the PowerPlay.

Jonny Bairstow's wicket followed shortly after when Donovan Ferreira and Riyan Parag combined to take a relay catch near the skirting.

Just when Curran and Jitesh Sharma seemed to have settled down, Chahal managed to see the back of the wicketkeeper-batter. Ashutosh Sharma, who walked in next to join his skipper, ensured there were no more hiccups.

Earlier, it didn't take long for one to realise that the odd ball would swing at the venue.

Curran was quick to pounce, deceiving Yashasvi Jaiswal into playing a drive away from the body and getting an inside edge onto the stumps.

Tom Kohler-Cadmore, on debut, failed to provide respite to Rajasthan, which has been struggling with a royal headache for the past two days owing to the Jos Buttler-shaped hole at the top of the order.

With the pressure building, Samson hit Nathan Ellis' bouncer straight down the throat of backward point, while trying to target the shorter square boundaries.

Parag, who strode in to a rousing reception from the home crowd, combined with R. Ashwin to put up a 50-run stand off 34 balls.

However, once Ashwin fell, it became difficult for RR to arrest the slide. Parag, who fell two short of his fifty, could only do so much.

Leading from the front: Curran followed up his two-wicket haul with an unbeaten 63. AFP

SCOREBOARD

RAJASTHAN ROYALS
Yashasvi Jaiswal b Curran 4 *(4b, 1x4)*, Tom Kohler-Cadmore c Jitesh b Rahul Chahar 18 *(23b, 2x4, 1x6)*, Sanju Samson c Rahul Chahar b Ellis 18 *(15b, 3x4)*, Riyan Parag lbw b Harshal 48 *(34b, 6x4)*, R. Ashwin c Shashank b Arshdeep 28 *(19b, 3x4, 1x6)*, Dhruv Jurel c Harpreet b Curran 0 *(1b)*, Rovman Powell c and b Rahul Chahar 4 *(5b, 1x4)*, Donovan Ferreira c Rossouw b Harshal 7 *(8b)*, Trent Boult run out 12 *(9b, 2x4)*, Avesh Khan (not out) 3 *(2b)*; Extras (lb-1, w-1): 2; Total (for nine wkts. in 20 overs): 144.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-4 (Jaiswal, 0.4 overs), 2-40 (Samson, 6.4), 3-42 (Kohler-Cadmore, 7.2), 4-92 (Ashwin, 12.6), 5-97 (Jurel, 13.3), 6-102 (Powell, 14.3), 7-125 (Ferreira, 17.3), 8-138 (Parag, 19.2 ov), 9-144 (Boult, 19.6).

PUNJAB KINGS BOWLING
Curran 3-0-24-2, Arshdeep 4-0-31-1, Ellis 4-0-24-1, Harshal 4-0-28-2, Rahul Chahar 4-0-26-2, Harpreet 1-0-10-0.

PUNJAB KINGS
Prabhsimran Singh c Chahal b Boult 6 *(4b, 1x4)*, Jonny Bairstow c Parag b Chahal 14 *(22b, 1x4)*, Rilee Rossouw c Jaiswal b Avesh 22 *(13b, 5x4)*, Shashank Singh lbw b Avesh 0 *(2b)*, Sam Curran (not out) 63 *(41b, 5x4, 3x6)*, Jitesh Sharma c Parag b Chahal 22 *(20b, 2x6)*, Ashutosh Sharma (not out) 17 *(11b, 1x4, 1x6)*; Extras (w-1): 1; Total (for five wkts. in 18.5 overs): 145.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-6 (Prabhsimran, 0.4 overs), 2-36 (Rossouw, 4.3), 3-36 (Shashank, 4.5), 4-48 (Bairstow, 7.6), 5-111 (Jitesh, 15.4).

ROYALS BOWLING
Boult 3-0-27-1, Sandeep 4-0-28-0, Avesh 3.5-0-28-2, Ashwin 4-0-31-0, Chahal 4-0-31-2.

Toss: Rajasthan Royals.
PoM: Curran
PBKS won by five wickets with seven deliveries remaining

Points table

	M	W	L	NR	PTS	NRR
Kolkata Knight Riders (Q)	13	9	3	1	19	1.428
Rajasthan Royals (Q)	13	8	5	0	16	0.273
Chennai Super Kings	13	7	6	0	14	0.528
Sunrisers Hyderabad	12	7	5	0	14	0.406
Delhi Capitals	14	7	7	0	14	-0.377
Royal Challengers	13	6	7	0	12	0.387
Lucknow Super Giants	13	6	7	0	12	-0.787
Gujarat Titans (E)	13	5	7	1	11	-1.063
Punjab Kings (E)	13	5	8	0	10	-0.347
Mumbai Indians (E)	13	4	9	0	8	-0.271

Q: Qualified | **E:** Eliminated

Next assignment

PBKS: May 19 vs **SRH** Hyderabad, 3.30 p.m.
RR: May 19 vs **KKR** Guwahati, 7.30 p.m.

Neeraj beats the heat and Manu's challenge

FEDERATION CUP

Y.B. Sarangi
BHUBANESWAR

World and Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra, who travelled more than 4,000km after competing in the Doha Diamond League on May 10, adapted to a different weather condition to the best of his ability to measure 82.27m and win the men's javelin gold in the National Federation athletics meet at the Kalinga Stadium here on Wednesday.

On a humid evening, Neeraj, who was competing in India for the first time since winning the Olympic gold three years ago, was the centre of attraction.

With Olympic champion hurdler Anier Garcia, Olympic hockey gold medallist M.M. Somaya and Worlds bronze medallist Anju Bobby George in attendance, Neeraj did not disappoint around 2,000 fans who greeted and backed him with loud cheers and whistles.

Early lead

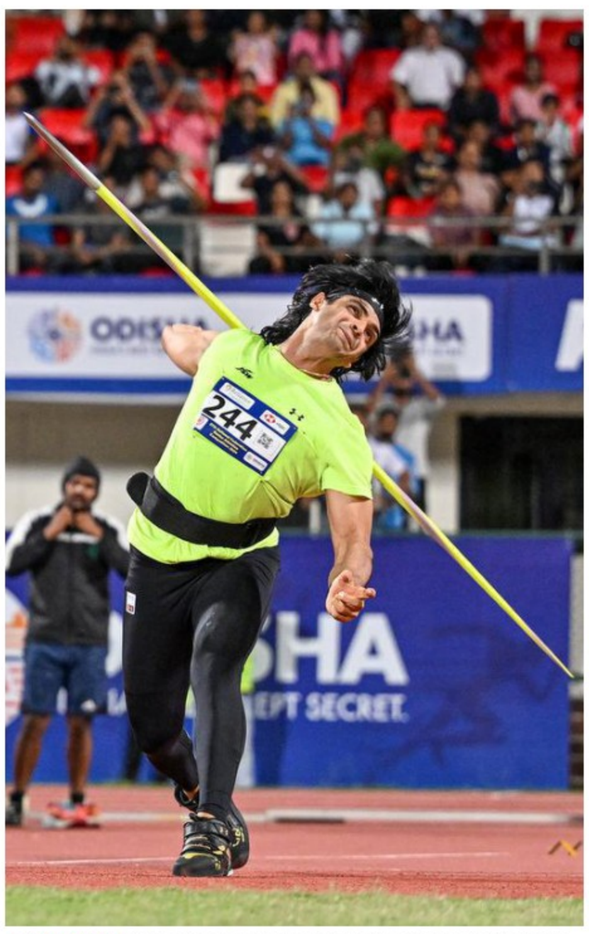
D.P. Manu took an early lead by throwing 82.06m, to which Neeraj, who was second in the order, managed 82m.

The two were engaged in a battle for gold and silver, while the others, including local star and Asian Games silver medallist Kishore Jena could not impress. Jena threw 75.25m in his sixth attempt to end up fifth.

Manu held his lead till the half-way mark before Neeraj, who changed his jersey after three throws, pulled off his best effort and jumped to the top spot. As Manu fouled his last two attempts, Neeraj, who had a long discussion with his coach Klaus Bartonietz, preferred to skip his last two and conserve energy ahead of a busy calendar leading up to the Olympics.

Praveen Chithravel, who had achieved 17.12m in the Indian Grand Prix in Bengaluru, leaped to 16.79m to take the triple jump gold, but was disappointed to perform well below the Olympic qualifying mark of 17.22m.

Other prominent jumpers including Eldhose Paul and Abdulla Aboobaker finished second and fourth respectively.



Lettin' it rip: After a slow start, Neeraj showed why he is the best. K.R. DEEPAK

Chithravel leaped to 16.79m to take the triple jump gold. BISWARANJAN ROUT

Ajmal wins 400m

Muhammed Ajmal clocked 45.91 for the men's 400m title, while seasoned quartermiler M.R. Poovamma timed 53.32 to claim the women's crown. It was Ajmal's season best time.

The fastest runners of the event, Gurindervir Singh (10.35) and Sneha S.S. (11.63), also recorded their best performances of the season.

The results (finals): Men:
100m: 1. Gurindervir Singh (Pun) 10.35, 2. Animesh Kujur (Odi) 10.50, 3. Harjit Singh (Pun) 10.56; **400m:** 1. Muhammed Ajmal (Ker) 45.91, 2. Santhosh Kumar T. (TN) 46.48, 3. Vikrant Panchal (Har) 46.62.
1500m: 1. Mehedi Hassan (Asm) 3:42.82, 2. Abhishek Singh Thakur (MP) 3:43.49, 3. Yoonus Shah (UP) 3:44.25; **10,000m:** 1. Mohan Saini (Goa) 30:41.65, 2. Puneet Yadav (Har) 30:42.78, 3. Ankit Deshwal (Har) 30.44.32.
Triple jump: 1. Praveen Chithravel (TN) 16.79m, 2. Eldhose Paul (Ker) 16.59m, 3. Mohammed Salahuddin (TN) 16.25m.
Javelin: 1. Neeraj Chopra (Har) 82.27m, 2. Manu D.P. (Kar) 82.06m, 3. Uttam Patil (Mah) 78.39m.
Women: 100m: 1. Sneha S.S. (Kar) 11.63, 2. Giridharani Ravikumar (TN) 11.67, 3. Srabani Nanda (Odi) 11.76.
400m: 1. M.R. Poovamma (Kar) 53.32, 2. Summy (Har) 53.46, 3. Vithya Ramraj (TN) 53.52.
1500m: 1. Akshana (MP) 4:23.65, 2. Nikita Sharma (HP) 4:25.05, 3. Amandeep Kaur (Pun) 4:28.10; **10,000m:** 1. Soniya (Ukd) 37:15.29, 2. Pooja Yadav (UP) 37:17.44, 3. Prajakta Godbole (Mah) 37: 27.34.
Hammer: 1. Harshita Sehrawat (Del) 59.10m, 2. Tanya Chaudhary (UP) 56.51m, 3. Manpreet Kaur (Pun) 56.4m.
High jump: 1. Abhinaya Shetty (Kar) 1.77m, 2. Angel Devasia (Ker) 1.74m, 3. Most Ritu Akhtar (Ban) 1.71m.
Heptathlon (after seven events): 1. Agasara Nandini (Tel) 5460, 2. Anamika K.A. (Ker) 4997, 3. Deepika S. (TN) 4817.

Neeraj happy to perform in front of local fans

Sports Bureau
BHUBANESWAR

Even though his gold winning throw (82.27m) at the National Federation athletics meet at the Kalinga Stadium here was not up to the mark due to the hot and humid conditions, World and Olympic champion javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra enjoyed competing in the country after three years in front of thousands of fans.

"As I had returned after competing in Doha (Diamond League), I was here after some long travel and my recovery was not that good. So from the start I knew that my effort will be like how my body responds," said Neeraj.

"That is why I didn't take the last two throws. Also, I have to compete in Ostrava (May 28) next in less than two weeks," added Neeraj, who last won a gold medal with an 82m-plus throw in the 2016 South Asian Games where he equalled Rajinder Singh's record (82.23m), after the event on Wednesday.

"It was a great feeling to compete in India after a long time. I'm happy to see so many people turning up to watch athletics."

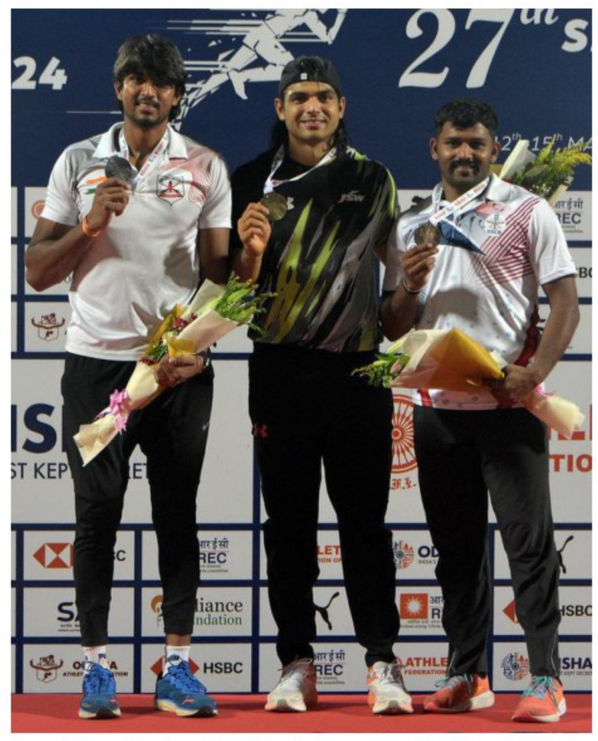
Neeraj said he decided to compete in the Federation meet as the mandatory event, the National inter-State scheduled at Panchkula in June, was closer to the Olympics.

About the competitive field in javelin at the domestic level, the champion thrower said such a competition would raise the level of the sport.

"Remember the Germans. When (Andreas) Hofmann, (Thomas) Rohler, (Johannes) Vetter & (Julian) Webber competed, they used to push each other and they touched 90m in their nationals.

"So, when they competed in Worlds and Diamond League, the Germans always used to finish first or second.

"Likewise, if we can push each other (Jena, Manu and I) and throw 85m plus, we will enjoy competing together at the international meets," he said.



Spurring each other: Neeraj feels that competition from the likes of Manu, left, will help improve the standards. BISWARANJAN ROUT

INBRIEF

Babar, Rizwan, Shaheen star in Pakistan's T20I series win

Pakistan blew away Ireland by six wickets and won its Twenty20 series 2-1 in Dublin on Tuesday. It had no problems overhauling Ireland's 178 on Tuesday with three overs remaining.

The scores: Ireland 178/7 in 20 overs (Lorcan Tucker 73, Andrew Balbernie 35, Shaheen 3/14) lost to Pakistan 181/4 in 17 overs (Babar Azam 75, Mohammad Rizwan 56, Adair 3/28). *(Pakistan won by six wickets with 18 balls to spare to win three-match T20I series 2-1)*. **Player-of-the-Match:** Shaheen. **Toss**: Pakistan.

Sabalenka breezes past Ostapenko, into semifinals

Aryna Sabalenka cruised into the semifinals of the Rome Open on Wednesday after comfortably defeating Jelena Ostapenko in straight sets, 6-2, 6-4. Second seed Sabalenka needed an hour and 13 minutes to see off Ostapenko and improve her record against her Latvian opponent to three wins and no defeats. In men's action, 29th seed Alejandro Tabilo of Chile extended his surprising run by beating Zhang Zhizhen 6-3, 6-4 .

The results: Quarterfinals: Women: Sabalenka bt Ostapenko 6-2, 6-4; Gauff bt Zheng 7-6(4), 6-1.
Men: Tabilo bt Zhang 6-3, 6-4.

Satwik-Chirag sail into second round, Prannoy crashes out

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty progressed to the men's doubles second round but it was curtains for fifth seed H.S. Prannoy after being stunned by compatriot Meiraba Luwang Maisnam in the men's singles opening round of Thailand Open in Bangkok on Wednesday.

The results (first round): Men: Meiraba Luwang Maisnam bt H.S. Prannoy 21-19, 21-18. **Doubles:** Satwiksairaj Rankireddy & Chirag Shetty bt Nur Mohd Azriyn Ayub Azriyn & Tan Wee Kiong (Mas) 21-13, 21-13.
Women: Ashmita Chaliha bt Ester Nurumi Tri Wardoyo (Ina) 19-21, 21-15, 21-14; Han Yue (Chn) bt Malvika Bansod 21-11, 21-10; Lianne Tan (Bel) bt Unnati Hooda 14-21, 21-14, 21-19.

Haaland double puts Man City on brink of PL history

Erling Haaland scored twice to settle Manchester City's nerves as the Premier League champion beat Tottenham 2-0 to take a giant step towards a historic fourth consecutive title on Tuesday. It takes Pep Guardiola's team two points clear of Arsenal at the top and means victory against West Ham will make it champion for a fourth straight season, regardless of the Gunners' result against Everton.

The results: Premier League: Tottenham 0 lost to Manchester City 2 (Haaland 51, 90+1-pen).
LaLiga: Osasuna 1 (Moncayola 14) drew with Real Mallorca 1 (Darder 65); Real Madrid 5 (Bellingham 10, Vinicius 27, 70, Valverde 45+1, Guler 81) bt Alaves 0.

LIVE TELECAST

IPL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & JioCinema, 7.30 p.m.
PGA Championship: Fancode, 11.30 p.m.
LaLiga: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & JioCinema, 1 a.m. (Friday)

Sunrisers eye a play-off spot

Cummins' men have been on fire with the bat; bowling being a concern for both the home team and the visiting Gill-led Titans

IPL-17

Sahil Mathur
HYDERABAD

Sunrisers Hyderabad and Gujarat Titans face off is a story of contrast. One team is on the brink of booking a playoff berth while the other has already been eliminated. The batting approach is another aspect, and the major one, that makes SRH and GT poles apart.

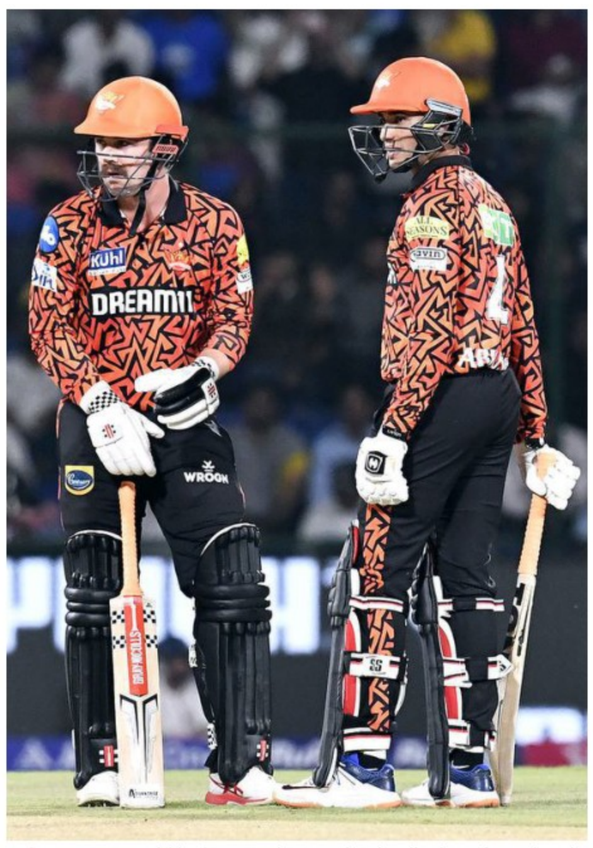
And Thursday could be the day for the Pat Cummins-led side to seal its place in the top four when two teams meet here.

SRH's success this season has mostly come through its openers – Travis Head and Abhishek Sharma – who have utilised the fielding restrictions fully, racking up a boundary every three balls.

The rest of the batters too have benefited from the blistering starts by the opening duo and made sure SRH finishes the innings in similar fashion.

In contrast, Titans have been poor starters with the bat despite some decent individual performances especially by Sai Sudharsan and Shubman Gill. What has hurt them is the lack of collective effort.

What brings the both SRH and GT closer, though, is their bowling.



X-factor: GT would be keen to dismiss the deadly duo of Head and Abhishek early. FILE PHOTO: SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Neither SRH has been able to control the opposition's scoring rate nor GT, who is especially hurt with Rashid Khan's rare poor show this season.

Yet, the difference between the two sides is that Hyderabad doesn't mind conceding a few extra runs while Gujarat's attempt to make three consecutive playoffs ever since making its debut in the Indian Premier League has ended.

Today's match

SUNRISERS vs GUJARAT TITANS

Hyderabad, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD
Played: 4
SRH 1 | GT 3

PREVIOUS MEETING
GT won by seven wickets, 2024

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD) & JIO CINEMA

All in readiness: Gill will be hoping to end the season on a high. FILE PHOTO: VIJAY SONEJI

Titans still motivated despite the position in the table: Gill

V.V. Subrahmanyam
HYDERABAD

"We need to be at our best, prepare well and play the opposition in the conditions as best we possibly can, but most importantly concentrate on our aggressive brand of cricket," Sunrisers Hyderabad assistant coach Simon Helmot said.

"Whether it be scoring runs or taking wickets or being really aggressive in the field, I don't think our approach will change," Helmot said on the eve of the IPL match against Gujarat Giants here on Wednesday.

"Bhuvneshwar Kumar kept bowling the same way, using his same plans. And, there are no issues with the bowling department," he added.

GT skipper Shubman Gill said the real challenge [against SRH] will be to replicate the kind of performance his team had put up against Chennai Super Kings.

"Can we come up with the same intensity? Knowing that we won't be able to qualify, turning up for the contest and still doing our best would be the challenge," he said.

"I am as motivated as one can be. Irrespective of what the team position is, I always play to win. That's the mindset and the intensity at which I go about my things.

"I can say that you would see all of our players playing at that intensity," he added.

Arjun beats Safarli; winning start for Iniyan and Aravindh

SHARJAH MASTERS

Press Trust of India
SHARJAH

World No. 7 Arjun Erigaise started his campaign on a positive note, outplaying Eltaj Safarli of Azerbaijan in the first round of the Sharjah Masters chess tournament here.

Indian Grandmasters Aravindh Chithamabaram and P. Iniyan also started on the winning side, defeating compatriot Bharath Subramaniyam and Irani Pouya of Iran respectively in the $5,000 prize money tournament considered as one of the strongest open event of the world.

Eight rounds remain in the 88-player tournament.

The results (involving Indians): First round: Arjun Erigaisi bt Eltaj Safarli (Aze); S.P. Sethuraman drew with Temour Radjabov (Aze); Amin Tabatabaei (Iri) bt V. Pranav; S.L. Narayanan drew with Sanal Vahap (Tur); Yagiz Kaan Erdogmus (Tur) drew with Nihal Sarin; Aravindh Chithambaram bt Bharath Subramaniyam; Raunak Sadhwani drew with David Gavrilescu (Rou); Sankalp Gupta drew with Ter-Sahakyan Samvel (Arm); Nguyen Thai Dai Van (Cze) bt Pranav Anand;
Leon Luke Mendonca lost to Marcin Krzyzanowski (Pol); Abhimanyu Mishra (USA) bt Raja Rithvik; Abhimanyu Puranik drew with B. Adhiban.
D. Harika drew with Manuel Petrosyan (Arm); Nikolas Theodorou (Gre) bt Aditya Samant; Aditya Mittal drew with Cardoso Jose Gabriel (Esp); P. Iniyan bt Idani Pouya (Iri); Abhijeet Gupta drew with Bibisara Assaubayeva (Kaz).

Anjum and Aishwary top qualification in rifle 3-position

SHOOTING

Sports Bureau

Olympian and World Championship silver medallist Anjum Moudgil took a significant step forward by shooting 592 in women's rifle 3-position event in the third Olympic selection trials in Bhopal on Wednesday.

Anjum had 192 in kneeling, 199 in prone and 195 in standing positions, as she stayed ahead of Asian Games gold medallist and World record holder Sift Kaur Samra (589) and Ashi Chouksey (585).

Nischal and Olympic quota winner Shriyanka Sadangi also shot 585 each but that does not lift their overall fortunes much in the race for the two slots in the event for Paris.

The finals will be shot on Thursday, but that provides only decimal bonus points for the top three.

Crack shot: Anjum, left, took the honours on Wednesday. RITU RAJ KONWAR

In the men's rifle 3-position event, Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar continued to step it up as he topped qualification with 590, three points better than Olympic quota winner Swapnil Kusale.

The other Olympic quota winner and World Cup gold medallist, Akhil Sheoran slipped a bit with 584.

With the best three of the four scores being taken into consideration, the equations can change significantly till the last score is shot.

Rifle 3-position results (qualification): Men: 1. Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar 590, 2. Swapnil Kusale 587, 3. Akhil Sheoran 584, 4. Chain Singh 583, 5. Niraj Kumar 583.

Women: 1. Anjum Moudgil 592, 2. Sift Kaur Samra 589, 3. Ashi Chouksey 585, 4. Nischal 585, 5. Shriyanka Sadangi 585.

Joshna-Abhay duo claims mixed doubles crown

SQUASH

S. Prasanna Venkatesan
CHENNAI

Joshna Chinappa and Abhay Singh beat Rathika Suthanthira Seelan and Harinder Pal Singh Sandhu 10-11, 11-2, 11-9 in a 45-minute final to become the mixed doubles champions in the HCL National doubles squash championship at the Indian Squash and Triathlon Academy (ISTA) here on Wednesday.

The Joshna-Abhay pair was 3-5 down before drawing level 5-5 in the first game. From there, it was 10-all before Harinder-Rathika clinched the final point and the game. But the duo followed it up with a dismal performance to go down 2-11 in the second game.

The third game was neck-and-neck, with the longest rally of the match seeing Harinder-Rathika making it 6-6. It was 7-all, 8-all, and 9-all before Joshna and Abhay claimed two consecutive points to close out the match.

Winners all: Joshna, Abhay, Velavan, Pooja, and Rathika with their reward. M. SRINATH

Joshna was all praise for the 23-year-old Rathika.

Easy going

Contrastingly, Rathika had it easy with her partner Pooja Arthi in the third and deciding game of the women's doubles final. The pair drubbed Janet Vidhi and Nirupama Dubey 11-1 in the third game to clinch the title 11-3, 9-11, 11-1. It was 3-all, 5-all, and 7-5 before Abhay and Velavan Senthilkumar eventually secured the second game 11-8 to win the men's doubles final against Rahul Baitha and Suraj Chand 11-4, 11-8.

The results (finals): Men: Abhay Singh & Velavan Senthilkumar bt Rahul Baitha & Suraj Chand 11-4, 11-8.

Women: Rathika Suthanthira Seelan & Pooja Arthi bt Janet Vidhi & Nirupama Dubey 11-3, 9-11, 11-1.

Mixed: Joshna Chinappa & Abhay Singh bt Rathika Suthanthira Seelan & Harinder Pal Singh Sandhu 10-11, 11-2, 11-9.

T20 World Cup to be streamed with Indian Sign Language

Aroon Deep
NEW DELHI

In a first for Indian sports streaming, the ICC men's T20 cricket World Cup will be streamed with Hindi audio description and Indian Sign Language (ISL) for visually and hearing-impaired viewers, it was announced by Disney+ Hotstar, which has the streaming rights on Wednesday.

"Being the first OTT platform to introduce this feature for live cricket, we are democratising the game. We have made this feature available for 10 matches, including India matches, semifinals and finals," Sajith Sivanandan, head of Disney+ Hotstar, told *The Hindu* in response to an emailed questionnaire.

While the ISL interpretation of commentary is new for streaming, Disney had streamed some matches of the Indian Premier League (IPL) with a Hindi descriptive track in 2022.

JioCinema, which now owns the streaming rights to IPL, does not have closed captioning, ISL interpretation, or a descriptive audio track in any language.

On Star Sports

Star Sports, which has IPL's TV broadcast rights, announced similar accessibility features last month.

"We aim to make our entertainment content accessible for the deaf, hard of hearing and visually impaired communities on VOD (video on demand) and live content over the next 12-18 months," said Mr. Sivanandan.

Anand, Carlsen to feature in Casablanca Chess Variant

P.K. Ajith Kumar

A unique chess event featuring two of the game's all-time greats will unfold at Casablanca this weekend.

Viswanathan Anand and Magnus Carlsen – both five-time World champions – are among the four players for the Casablanca Chess Variant to be held in the Moroccan city. Hikaru Nakamura and Bassem Amin are the others.

What makes the event special is its format. The games will not be original ones, but different variations from those played in the past. The players will be given a certain position and they will have to continue it on their own, and they cannot make offers of draw.

The Casablanca Chess Variant will be held on May 18 and 19. The time control is 15 minutes with an increment of 10 seconds.

Joshna elated after making a comeback from injury

S. Prasanna Venkatesan
CHENNAI

Joshna Chinappa, here on Wednesday, expressed happiness in being back on the court and playing again with her friends and teammates after the knee surgery in December.

The squash star added that she is still rehabilitating and focused on getting back to full fitness.

"It's been interesting because I wasn't sure I would ever get back on court again. My surgeon and my physios were very confident that I would come back to play. I moved to Bengaluru for the last five months. I worked with my physio Yash Pandey and his team there.

"And when I heard this tournament was coming up, I was quite excited to see if I could be fit enough to play. Three days ago, the physio said: 'You can get on court. But don't push yourself too hard, because you're not fully ready.'

"I'm just so happy to play squash again. Winning, obviously, is special. But just to get on court, hit the ball, play with friends, play with my teammates, that's what squash is for me. That's the joy I get out of it," she said after winning the mixed doubles title with Abhay Singh at the HCL National doubles squash championship.

"Right now, I'm just trying to get back to full fitness. I'm still in rehab for my surgery. Once I'm fully fit in a few weeks, I'll take a call on what singles tournaments to play."